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Anecdotes of a Missionary
Geiermann,



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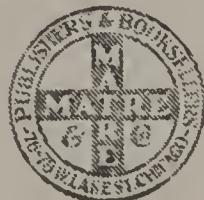
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Anecdotes of a Missionary

By

Rev. Peter Geiermann, C. SS. R.

(Author of "The Mediator," "The Narrow Way," "Private Retreat," "Manual of Theology for the Laity," "Margaret's Influence," etc., etc.)



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FOREWORD

These Anecdotes were written at the solicitation of friends to preserve some of the stories the author had told them after his various missionary tours. They are now given to the public in the hope of inspiring the reader with confidence in the infinite goodness and mercy of God and the compassionate love of Mary in the daily trials of life. Whenever an anecdote might cause embarrassment to anyone fictitious names are used.

The Author.

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It might be you



Anecdotes of a Missionary
Geiermann

“HAIL, HOLY QUEEN! I’M MUCH OBLIGED”

WHILE making his rounds of the county hospital one day, the chaplain found two patients in a little ward where they had been left by the attendants to die, so that they would not disturb the other patients by their death-struggle. One happened to be a colored man, who had never been baptized, while the other was a white man who had apostatized from the faith. Both were still conscious, but in imminent danger of death. After making the necessary inquiries, the chaplain devoted his special attention to the white man and exhorted him to make his peace with God. This patient, however, refused the chaplain’s kind offer, cursed him and abused him shamefully. Finally he sought to rid himself of his annoyance by saying: “As soon as you make a Catholic of that——nigger I will go to confession.”

With an apology for the white man’s language the chaplain then approached the cot on which the dying negro lay, and said: “My friend, God created every man for heaven. His Son died upon the cross to give every one of good will the means of attaining eternal happiness. He has no preference in regard to race or color, and tells us that a favor which is refused by one is taken away and given to another. You have just heard that man refuse to be reconciled to the Lord. I am going to kneel down and pray to the Mother of the Saviour to intercede with her Son that this favor which he has refused, be offered to you.” And he knelt down and prayed “Hail, Holy Queen,” in a loud voice.

At the conclusion of the prayer the colored man turned to the chaplain and inquired with animation: “Do you mean to say, sah, there is a chance for this nigger to go to the white man’s heaven?”

"I certainly do," replied the chaplain, good-naturedly. "The Lord loves all of us so much that He is color-blind. If you wish I will give you a first-class ticket to heaven, and a clear title to a mansion of the elect. The conditions are that you believe in God, have confidence in the merits of Jesus Christ, be truly sorry for your sins, and seek to please God as long as you live."

"The bargain is closed," said the colored man with decision. "I reckon, however, that you had better elucidate those conditions somewhat so that I may carry them out to the letter. Before we proceed with the negotiations," he resumed in a gentler tone, "I would like to ask you as a favor, sah, to repeat that prayer for me again. It has touched my heart, and I am awfully anxious to remember it, so that I can show my appreciation to the Lady when I git above."

The chaplain willingly complied with the colored man's request, instructed him in the necessary truths, helped him to make an act of contrition, and baptized him. When he finally concluded his ministrations the colored man expressed his gratitude by devoutly repeating: "Hail, Holy Queen—I'm much obliged."

"I win!" said the chaplain as he again faced the white man.

"I'm game," doggedly replied the patient, "but what's the use? You have already given that nigger my place in heaven, and besides, I have committed crimes that God can't stand for. I have killed a man, accused another of the crime, and falsely sworn away his life."

"The more wrong you have done the more reason have you for putting all your trust in the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, Who died to save you from hell," explained the chaplain. "It is true, you refused the grace of God a while ago, and that good man eagerly accepted it. But the treasures of grace are

infinite, and God wishes them to be effective. Will you accept that grace now?"

"I would if my sins could be forgiven, but they are too great," said the dying man, trembling from head to foot.

"As you haven't long to live, and wish to die in peace," resumed the chaplain, "I will take your sins upon myself and be responsible for them before the judgment seat of God, even as the Saviour took upon himself the sins of the world."

"I cannot accept so generous an offer," protested the dying man as he tried to raise himself up in bed.

"But I insist," replied the chaplain. "You are dying. I am not. Rest assured our blessed Lady will help me make things right with the God of infinite mercy. So we will now proceed with your confession."

"Thank you, Father," said the dying man with a sigh of relief, and blessing himself began his confession. After he had received all the consolations of his holy religion he begged the priest to say "that prayer" with him. So both recited "Hail, Holy Queen" together. While the chaplain was reciting the concluding oration, the patient sighed like a slumbering child, murmured "Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy," and died.

THE SHEEP THAT WAS LOST

THE Saviour tells us "there shall be more joy in heaven upon one sinner that doeth penance than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance." In proportion as the faithful on earth are interested in the Master's cause, they share in this joy upon a sinner's repentance. Father Barry experienced this happiness

when he finally succeeded in reconciling John Conway to God.

Like the Good Shepherd, Father Barry went in search of the lost sheep. For years he pursued John Conway with kindness without bringing him to church. By experience he learned to expect an insult whenever he mentioned the subject of religion to this old miner. So he begged the Master to touch the heart of this prodigal son and lead him to true repentance.

In making the round of the hospital one day, the priest found John Conway in a dying condition. "John, you are a very sick man," said the priest after expressing his sympathy upon finding him a patient in the institution. "Wouldn't you like to receive Holy Communion?" "No," replied John emphatically, "I will wait until I can go to church." When the priest insisted, John became angry and turned his face to the wall.

After ministering to another patient, Father Barry returned to the room occupied by the old miner. Kneeling down by the patient's bed, he said: "John, I will say a prayer with you." But Conway was still in a surly mood and interrupted him by declaring he did not need the assistance of the priest to say his prayers.

After failing in a third attempt to convert John Conway, Father Barry started to leave the hospital. When he had proceeded as far as the door, however, some invisible power seemed to detain him and urge him to return. He calmly re-entered the sick room and seated himself near the patient.

"How long since you were to Confession?" he quietly asked, as though he had been summoned by the dying man. "Forty-five years," replied John Conway. The priest then proceeded delicately to examine the conscience of the old miner. When this had been accomplished, he surprised him by saying: "Now that you have made your Confession, I will make an

act of contrition with you and give you Holy Communion."

To Father Barry's delight, John Conway was now a changed man. He received the Sacraments with great piety and apologized to the priest for his rudeness. "Have you practised any devotion during life, John, that gave you a claim on this extra-ordinary grace?" inquired the priest of the dying man. "The only prayer I said during these years," replied John feebly, is: 'Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, assist me in my last agony. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, may I breathe forth my soul with you in peace.'" He then went to sleep like a child.

"O MARY, CURE MY CHILD!"

"HELLO, Captain Baker! Why are you carrying your arm in a sling?"

"Father, I went down to St. Louis to bring back a man who has five murders to his record. Though I had him handcuffed, he got my gun while we were boarding the train and shot me before I subdued him. He is going to hang a week from tomorrow. He is a strange character with a religious mania. When he was taken he had about five pounds of crucifixes and medals on his person and wore the scapular, but now he refuses to talk to a priest."

"What is his name," asked the missionary. "I have been too busy to read the papers since I came to town."

"He has many names," replied the detective, "though I have reason to think his real name is John Martin, and that he was born in Ohio."

"What?" exclaimed the missionary in surprise.

"John Martin? When I was a boy he advised me to become a priest and a missionary. I did hear he went wrong later on, but I am sorry to learn that this has been his career. As he once gave me good advice, however, I ought to see what I can do for him now. Will you show me the way if I meet you tomorrow at 10 o'clock?"

"I will be delighted to do so," replied Captain Baker.

When the missionary paused before the iron bars of the condemned man's cell the following day, Martin flew into a rage and exclaimed: "I don't want to see any——priest!"

"Just look the other way then while I tell you a story," pleasantly replied the priest. Martin sullenly paced up and down his cage as the priest seated himself and said: "Forty years ago there was a poor couple living on a little farm in Ohio. They had prayed for a child for a long time before God blessed them with a son. He was welcomed and cared for as a messenger from heaven. When the lad was four years old he fell on the ice and sustained a compound fracture of the hip. When the doctors declared he would be a cripple all the days of his life, his mother, full of faith and confidence, carried him to a chapel in the woods, dedicated him to Mary, Queen of the Rosary, and besought her to cure him. For nine days she came and prayed the rosary, while the little boy lay at the foot of the altar. After each Hail Mary she said: 'O Mary, cure my child.' On the ninth day she added an act of consecration, dedicating her son for time and eternity to the Mother of God. Suddenly the lad sprang to his feet and said to his mother: 'Ma, I'm hungry! Let's go home and have dinner!'"

Here the prisoner paused at the bars, and with a look of astonishment cried out: "And who are you?"

"Please, don't interrupt my narrative," kindly protested the missionary, and proceeded. "The boy was cured from that hour. He was brought up with all the care due to a favored child of Mary. When he

was fourteen years of age his mother decided that the time had come to give her child to God. Without consulting him in the matter she sent him to a seminary to become a priest. At first the novelty appealed to him, but he always felt out of place. He did not want to become a priest, and yet he was too much of a coward to inform his mother or his confessor. His mother was foolish, but meant well in what she did. The son was foolish at first, but developed a vicious character as time went on. During one of his vacations he fell in love with a city girl, and several months before the time set for his ordination he left the seminary at night when all were asleep.

"In the seminary he must have read dime novels instead of studying his text-books, for soon after his departure from the seminary he broke into a jewelry store and stole \$10,000 worth of diamonds for his sweetheart. He was arrested, however, with the goods on his person and sent to the penitentiary for ten years. Here he was thoroughly initiated into evil ways by his associates, and graduated eventually as a daring highway robber. Besides many other crimes he now has five murders on his guilty soul. He is daily steeling his heart against the promptings of grace, but if he were to close his eyes calmly for a moment he would see his good mother kneeling in the little chapel praying as he heard her pray years ago: 'O Mary, cure my child!' It is true he broke her heart and sent her to an early grave by his wicked life. But in heaven she is now kneeling before the throne of mercy. 'O Mary, cure my child,' she says. 'He is your child now, for I consecrated him to you for time and eternity!'

By this time John Martin was on his knees, weeping like a child. "O Mother, forgive me," he sobbed, "for all the sorrow I have caused you! O God, be merciful to me a great sinner! Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray, pray for this miserable wretch! O, what a terrible delusion! I thought the whole world, even my

parents and the priests, were leagued against me, and I fought back in desperation, but now I see it was all my own fault." Finally he turned to the missionary and humbly asked: "And who are you, Father, that knows my whole life?" "I am the little boy you warned one vacation against the dangers of the world," replied the priest, "and urged to become a missionary if I wished to do great things for the good of souls. I followed your advice, and now owe you a boundless debt of gratitude."

"Can you have any pity for such a wretch as me, Father?" asked the condemned man with great misgivings depicted on his countenance.

"I not only pity you, my friend, but I sincerely sympathize with you," the missionary assured him, "and I am most anxious to reconcile you to God and to give you all the consolations of our holy religion in return for the favor you have done me. Here is a rosary for you, and a picture of Our Lady of the Rosary, your favorite picture of Our Lady as a child."

"O, thank you, Father, a thousand times!" exclaimed Martin, as he eagerly accepted the articles. "Come tomorrow and help me make a good confession of my whole life. I am so glad you have come. Stay with me to the end, and just before the trap falls whisper into my ear my mother's prayer, 'O Mary, cure my child.' It has touched my heart and inspires me with hope of forgiveness and of life eternal."

A NOCTURNAL VISITOR

"I want to see the man who preached tonight," announced the sullen, stalwart visitor. "It's after 11 o'clock," pleaded the house-keeper in alarm. "Can't you wait until morning? The Fathers have been working hard and are tired." "No! I can't wait," replied the man impatiently, "I must see him right away.

I know he is here. I have watched him since the sermon, and I just saw him leave the church and come to the house."

The mission was drawing vast crowds. Its influence was felt not only in the homes of practical Catholics, but even in the saloons, the gambling houses, and the dens of infamy, where Jim Smith worshipped since he had convinced himself that there was no hell. Though born of Catholic parents, Jim manifested a wayward disposition as a boy, and had drifted away from all religious restraint before he made his home in Ashland.

A bosom friend of Jim's had gone to the church the opening night of the exercises for the men, and was so fascinated by the services that he resolved to make the mission and change his life. When Jim could not prevail on his friend to accompany him to their accustomed haunts of vice, he, too, resolved to go to the church one night.

Instead of seeing the haughty, polished lecturer he had anticipated, Jim was surprised to find a simple, clear-eyed man, who placed the reasons of faith and revelation on the existence, the nature and the duration of the pains of hell, with such unction before his hearers that even Jim's hard heart was involuntarily touched. But, when his pride and evil habits rebelled against grace, the tempter whispered: "Kill the liar, for there is no hell!"

Thus it happened when the missionary entered the parlor that Jim Smith pointed his gun at him and shouted: "You don't believe a word of what you said to-night!" "Don't speak so loud, please," calmly replied the missionary. "It isn't necessary to rouse the house. You and I can settle this alone. Sit down and tell me your trouble, so that I can answer your questions clearly, for I do believe in hell."

After Jim Smith had given the priest an outline of his life, he concluded by saying: "I would have

shot you before you left the pulpit if you had not made that kind appeal to the sinner to turn from his evil ways." "I fear you are quarreling with yourself, and resisting the grace of God," then said the priest kindly. "Do you think the Son of God would have become man, and have died that cruel death upon the cross," he asked, as he held up his mission-cross, "if He wanted to damn you to hell? Do you think I could spend my life in working for strangers if I did not wish to make them eternally happy? Put your gun away, man. Don't you see how miserable your sins have made you? Kneel down and kiss the image of your crucified Saviour, and say with the publican, 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner.'" After a moment's hesitation, Jim Smith knelt down awkwardly, timidly kissed the crucifix, and then humbly begged the missionary to hear his confession.

A CHRISTIAN ENGAGEMENT

"FATHER, I have decided to take a course in religion," began a nervous young man, who had called on one of the Jesuit Fathers in Detroit. "I will be grateful if you will instruct me, and I will gladly pay you for your trouble." "Do you intend to become a Catholic?" kindly asked the priest. "By no means!" sharply replied the young man. "I met a charming young lady and called on her a few times. Last night she begged me to discontinue my visits, as she would never think of marrying any one but a Catholic. As I have reason to think she likes me I merely wish to find out what there is to her religion that prompted her to take this step."

"I sympathize with you," said the priest with a smile, "and I think I understand your position. As this will be a work of love I ask no other recompense

on your part than sincerity and good will in your studies," he continued. "Tell me, then, what do you know of God?" "God?" echoed the young man blankly. "God!" he repeated, as he looked at the ceiling and then at the floor. "Oh, the One who was supposed to have made all things?" he asked with a look of intelligence. "Evolution robbed Him of a job, and proved Him to be a myth."

"When and how did evolution do this wonderful thing?" asked the Jesuit calmly. "I really don't know," replied the young man. "We were taught that at school." "And where did this physical world come from before it began to evolve?" persisted the priest. "I have no idea," replied the young man, "unless——,unless——." "Precisely," said the priest. "Unless in the beginning God created heaven and earth, as the first words of the Bible tell us." "I see!" remarked the young man in a dazed condition. "At school we surely did not go down to bed-rock." "Religion is the science of knowing, loving and serving God," said the Jesuit after a pause. "Take this little catechism, learn the prayers and read over the first four chapters for discussion at our next session. I am glad you called."

On Christmas eve, six months later, this young man phoned the young lady and begged to accompany her to Christmas Mass. A reluctant consent sufficed to bring him to her door in ample time to accompany her and her family. All were too absorbed in their devotions to pay any special attention to the young man until the time for Communion arrived. Then the young lady was horrified to see him follow her to the railing. Twice she turned and whispered to him to go back. Though near her, he did not seem to understand, or was borne along with the crowd that surged to the railing. Not daring to cause a scene, she permitted him to kneel next to her, but was so disturbed that she hardly made any thanksgiving. "How dared

you receive Holy Communion?" she demanded, as they reached the vestibule. "Because I was baptized yesterday," replied the young man triumphantly. Of course congratulations were then in order. When finally they emerged from the vestibule, the young lady was wearing a platinum engagement ring.

A CONTRITE SINNER

"YOU will never git Joe to go to church," remarked the storekeeper to Father Barry, as he cast a glance towards an old miner, who just then happened to enter the store. Although Joe was a pioneer in the camp and a well-known character in town, even the zealous pastor had never suspected him of any Catholic affiliation.

"Good morning, Joe," Father Barry greeted the old miner a few moments later, as he took him by the hand and shook it cordially. "I have some good news for you, Joe. Next Sunday we begin a mission in the Catholic church. I am so glad to meet you here, for I want you to come at 10 o'clock." "How do you know I am a Catholic?" parried Joe, suspiciously. "Religion is like the smallpox, Joe," replied the pastor, similing, "it's bound to crop out." Then putting his hands on the miner's shoulders and beaming on him with a look of friendship, he added: "I'll be looking for you Sunday at 10 o'clock. Will you be there, Joe?" "I will!" replied Joe with a new determination.

The mission opened with a better attendance than on ordinary Sundays. When the services were over and the faithful filed out of the church, Joe was already on the sidewalk. Facing them with a twinkle in his eye, he said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I congratulate you that the church did not fall in on

you to-day. I was there for the first time in forty years." And without waiting for his acquaintances to reciprocate his congratulations, Joe hurried on to his dinner.

The mission progressed until Saturday afternoon before Joe was seen near the church again. While the missionary was in the church Father Barry was in his study saying Matins and Lauds when he observed the old miner pass by. Tapping on the window the pastor motioned to him to come in. "Have you been to Confession to the missionary, Joe?" asked Father Barry when the miner had taken a chair. "I have not," replied Joe. "I'm afraid he would have to stay another week if he began on me. Besides, the priest to whom I want to confess my sins is not far away just now." "Joe, you rogue, do you still know the act of contrition?" asked Father Barry, with evident delight, as he reached for his purple stole. "It's the only prayer I've said since I came to camp," Joe replied.

"HE DISGRACED HIMSELF FOR ME"

"PLEASE, Father, do you think I could become a Magdalen?" asked a young woman, blooming with health, as she entered the parlor. I was preaching a retreat for the "penitents" at the Home of the Good Shepherd, and the mother has requested me to see a few of the children.

After inviting my visitor to be seated, I looked at her carefully. If I were not within the walls of a reformatory I would have considered the young woman, who smiled so eagerly upon me, the personification of innocence and piety. She certainly seemed to have more stability of character than the average graduate of our boarding schools.

"What put that motion into your head?" I asked with intention of drawing her out. "Because I came

here to serve God with my whole heart and soul," replied the young woman without any hesitation. "Then you weren't brought here by your parents, or sent by the court?" I cruelly persisted, determined to discover this young woman's view of life.

"No Father," she replied, "I am here of my own free will?" And continued as she saw I was waiting further enlightenment, "I am the oldest of nine children. My parents live in——,——. I have been a daily communicant at home, and have read several spiritual books. In one of these I learned about the Magdalens, and found that one had to be a penitent in the Home of the Good Shepherd before she could become a Magdalen.

"I felt myself drawn to this sweet communion with our Saviour, which is the privilege of the Magdalens. I finally obtained my parents consent to come and work for the dear sisters. I wrote to be admitted to the penitent class, and have now been here two years. On your recommendation, Father, I can be admitted to the novitiate of the Magdalens. Please help me."

I was keenly perplexed, and attempted to change her mind. "A woman of your education and ability could become a useful member of some teaching Order," I remarked. But, please Father, I feel drawn to this life," she persisted. "Why, child," I said, "you would disgrace yourself by taking this step." "Not so much," she replied triumphantly, "as He disgraced Himself for love of me." As the Holy Ghost was evidently guiding her, I could not withhold the coveted recommendation.

"I HAD A GOOD MOTHER"

WHEN the missionary stepped from the train at Silverton, two husky miners confronted him. "Hello, Father!" exclaimed one, while the other came foreward and offered to carry the priest's suitcase.

Thinking the pastor had sent them to meet the belated train, the missionary gratefully accepted the services of the miner and started for the parochial residence.

Upon making inquiries of his guide about conditions in the town, the missionary was surprised to receive the reply: "We are strangers in Silverton. We came up yesterday to look for work, but don't like conditions. We are from Arizona, and intended to leave on the afternoon freight. As it may be late when we reach Durango, my pal went up town to bring lunch for both of us."

"I regret you cannot stay for the mission," remarked the missionary, as he studied his companion closely. "The fact is, I took you for one of the pastor's friends. As things are, I ought to do something to show my appreciation for your kindness towards me." As the miner smiled pleasantly the missionary continued: "Men that knock about a good deal often forget Church and the Sacraments. How long since you were to Confession?" "Not since I was a young man in Leadville, when Father Brown was pastor," replied the miner. "I had a good mother and intended to do what is right. I got in with bad companions when I left home, and haven't been to church since."

"I am very sorry you haven't proven yourself a worthy son of your mother in the past. You have still time to mend your ways and make her feel proud of you. When we reach St. Patrick's church will you step inside and prepare for Confession. Don't worry; I will help you, even as you are now helping me up this hill. All I ask of you is to turn over a new leaf and receive Holy Communion tomorrow in Durango."

The pastor was waiting for the missionary in front of the church and greeted him kindly. "Who is the stranger?" he asked, as he looked toward the house

of God. "I haven't any idea," replied the missionary. "I thought you had sent him to meet me. He wants to go to Confession, as he must leave on the freight."

Shortly after the missionary had heard the stranger's Confession the latter presented himself at the parochial residence and asked to be given "the pledge." Later on the pastor looked at the missionary's bald head and said, with a roguish smile: "I have heard of silly old maids falling in love with handsome missionaries, but this looks to me like the beginning of a good mission."

"YOU HAVE TAKEN PART IN MY ROSARY"

"WE HAD just closed the mission in _____," said the missionary. The church was a mile from the depot, and the train was scheduled to leave at 7 o'clock. Not wishing to omit holy Mass, I arose at half-past four. After making my thanksgiving, I began to pack my grip, and remembered that I had left a prayerbook and a rosary in the confessional. I returned to the church to bring them, and had arrived at the confessional when a middle-aged man entered. He looked sad and worried. Feeling compassion for him, I approached and said: 'Good morning. Is there anything I can do for you?'

"'Yes,' he eagerly replied. 'Please hear my confession. I got to go!' There was a disturbed look in his eye that made me doubt his sanity. Seeking to calm him, I said kindly: 'You don't have to go if you don't want to receive the Sacraments.' 'But I know that I shall be damned if I don't make my confession now,' he replied with great earnestness. Still puzzled, I sought a clue to the man's conduct by asking: 'The mission lasted all week, why didn't you

come before?' 'I didn't want to,' replied the man. 'Were you to the mission at all?' I asked. 'I happened along Saturday night and came in out of curiosity. You were saying the rosary. Though it was thirty-six years since I said a prayer, I remembered the rosary, for my mother taught it to me as a child. I joined in it for awhile, but soon a strange feeling came over me. All the sins of my mis-spent life began to parade before my mind. I thought of confession, and something urged me to wait until after the service and make my peace with God. I was afraid I might do something rash, so I picked up my hat and left.'

"'Shame on you,' I replied. 'That was the grace of God calling you to repentance.' 'Well, I didn't know,' protested the stranger, 'and I wasn't going to make a fool of myself.' 'And what did you do after leaving the church?' I asked. 'I walked the streets for hours and then played cards until midnight in the hope of ridding myself of that strange feeling. I went to bed at midnight but I didn't sleep.' 'Yesterday was Sunday. Did you go to church?' 'No, I didn't. I had made up my mind to fight the thing out, so I did the same as the night before. I walked around all day and played cards until midnight. I was so tired that I thought I had to sleep, but the more I closed my eyes the more sleep seemed to keep from me. About half an hour ago I heard some one call me by name. I sat up in bed and asked: "Well?" A sweet, sad, woman's voice answered: "You have taken part in my rosary Saturday night. I have offered you the grace of sincere conversion. If you don't go to confession before the missionaries leave, you will die in your sins."

"'Father, those words sounded terrible, and made me tremble from head to foot. I realized only then that Mary had been so good as to obtain this special grace for me. I gave up the fight there and then, got

on my knees to thank God for His mercy, dressed as quickly as possible, and came to church. I am so glad I found you here, and I hope you will not refuse to hear my confession.' 'I will hear you,' I replied, 'even if I miss my breakfast to catch my train.' 'Before I begin,' said the man, 'I want to take the pledge for life. I also promise to cut loose from my former associates. I realize what a fool I have been, and I promise with the help of God's grace to prove myself worthy of our Lady's favor.' "

ONLY A BLADE OF PALM

ONE OF the young men who acted on Horace Greeley's suggestion and went west to seek his fortune, was Leonard Williams. Born of poor parents, Williams had to quit school at an early age. To aid his family in the struggle for existence, he labored for years in the coal mines of Pennsylvania when other boys of his age were free from care. Being naturally studious and ambitious, the coal mine became both high school and university for young Williams. For by the time the family had become self-supporting, he had mastered the science of geology and become a practical mining engineer.

About that time the gold-fever of the Forty-niners had disappeared, and vague rumors of rich ore deposits in Colorado had been in circulation throughout the eastern states. Young Williams traced several of these rumors to their source, carefully sifted the information obtained, and finally decided to set out for the Pike's Peak region. After prospecting for a while, he finally staked his claim in a convenient locality, and began operations with the meager resources at his disposal. The result verified the correctness of his judgment, for in due time Mr. Wil-

liams struck a rich deposit of gold and silver ore. Instead of drinking and gambling to celebrate the dawn of prosperity, however, he persevered in the practice of his religion and redoubled his efforts to increase the output of his mine. And before many years had rolled by, Mr. Williams began to make regular trips to the Pueblo smelters with trainloads of precious ore.

On one of these trips an incident occurred that was destined by Providence to influence Mr. Williams' entire life. It had been his practice to arrange his trips to Pueblo so as to give him the opportunity of celebrating the principal feasts of the Church in town. This year Williams arrived during Passion week with the intention of remaining for the Easter celebration. On Palm Sunday he heard Mass in St. Ignatius church. Being a stranger he naturally waited until most of the parishioners had received the blessed palm before approaching the altar railing. The members of the choir immediately preceded him.

As Mr. Williams approached, he observed a vacant space next to the organist and crowded into it. Perhaps he felt more awkward in this position than in the cramped quarters of his mine. Perhaps the organist paid more attention to the handsome man at her side than to the distribution of the palms. At any rate, as the celebrant approached with the long blades of palm for the faithful, Williams caught hold of one end of a blade, while the organist grasped the other. When both bowed reverently to kiss the blessed palm, their cheeks touched. To this day neither knows whether the celebrant observed their confusion, as he calmly proceeded with the distribution, but Mr. Williams is certain that he carried off the palm that day. After the services Mr. Williams lingered near the church door to offer his apologies to the young lady and to beg her pardon for the embarrassment his awkwardness had caused her. By the time the

organist had collected the music and closed the organ, the faithful had already departed. "I wish to apologize for my stupidity and to offer you the palm I took from you," began Mr. Williams sheepishly. "It was all my own fault," protested the organist with a roguish smile. "Will you accompany me to the post-office? I expect a letter from my mother."

Instead of a brief apology, their meeting was thus protracted into a visit to an ice-cream parlor and later to a dinner at the hotel. The young lady was Miss Cullerton of Missouri, who had come to Pueblo in the hope of saving some property her mother owned. Through the influence of friends she had secured a position as teacher in the city schools and devoted her talents on Sunday morning to enhance the divine services. Though married many years now, both Mr. and Mrs. Williams still treasure the piece of blessed palm they devoutly kissed at their first meeting in St. Ignatius' church.

WITH AND WITHOUT GOD'S BLESSING

"YOU HAVE a beautiful new church," remarked the missionary to Mr. Eberhart, a refined old gentleman who spent much of his time before the Blessed Sacrament during the mission at —, Wis. "It is a fine church," admitted the old man with satisfaction, "but the old one is dearer to me," he added as he turned and smiled at a little frame structure. "I built that with my own hands forty years ago. When my brother and I came over sixty years ago we settled on a tract of land where Chicago now stands. As the soil was poor and swampy, and there seemed no prospect of the little town developing, we

sold out and came here to better ourselves. We found three Catholic families on our arrival, who had not seen a priest since they came west. As we had been accustomed to go to church I wrote to the Bishop and told him of our condition. He wrote a nice letter and promised to send us a priest occasionally if we would build a church. When we approached the others on the subject the richest man among them said: 'To hell with the church.' Another declared he had no time, while the third promised help, but did not keep his word. So my brother sawed the lumber and I put up the church."

"You certainly have reason to be proud of the work you and your brother have done, Mr. Eberhart," remarked the missionary, with approval. "No doubt God has blessed you in return."

"Yes, God has blessed us more than we deserved," admitted Mr. Eberhart. "Joe and his wife are gone to heaven, while their children are among the most prosperous and devoted members of the community. My children are all living. Thank God, none of them married out of the Church. When they settled down I was able to give every one a home and a section of land. My wife and I have come to live in town near the church, and have plenty to live on. We often say if we had stayed in Chicago our children might have been corrupted and lost forever."

"And what became of the three families you found here?" asked the missionary.

"They didn't fare so well as time went on," replied the old man. "The rich man who cursed the church, got tangled up in some litigation and eventually lost his property. He then hanged himself. One of his sons was shot in a saloon, and the other was lynched for a heinous crime. It is said his daughters became public women in La Crosse. His wife finally died in the poorhouse. The second man died without the priest. His children have lost the faith, and live in

poverty. When the third man came to die he became unconscious before the priest arrived. His children are married to non-Catholics and come to church occasionally."

"Alas, I have seen those who work iniquity, and sow sorrows, and reap them," quoted the missionary from the Book of Job.

"TO HELL WITH THE MISSION"

FATHER KELLY hired a conveyance and took the missionary to see the —, who were not attending church. Though the priests were fortunate in finding the family at home, they did not receive a cordial welcome. "It's money you want," replied Mr. — when the missionary invited him and his wife to attend the exercises. Like other avaricious families that never make any sacrifice to show their gratitude to God, the — were not as prosperous as their neighbors.

"The Son of God came from heaven to save us from hell," replied the missionary. "Your pastor gladly paid for this livery team that I might invite you to profit by the merits of the Saviour and escape the torments of the reprobate. We came to save your soul. If, like you, we were after money, Mr. —, we would not be priests of the crucified Master."

As the eternal welfare of his soul gave him little concern, Mr. — replied: "I am too old and too sickly to attend the mission, and my wife is in poor health, too."

"At least you and your wife can come to church some morning this week and receive the Sacraments," urged the missionary.

"I'll make no rash promise of the kind," replied Mr.

—, and retreated into the remote part of the house.

In the doorway sat a stalwart young man vigorously chewing tobacco. In his rudeness he had remained seated when the priests approached, and so prevented them from entering the house. "Father, this is Jack —," remarked the pastor.

"Jack, your parents are old and infirm," said the missionary, kindly. "You are young and strong. Promise me you will make the mission. Come to the services tonight, and bring your parents to the Sacraments during the week."

Barely deigning to raise his eyes, Jack replied with a sneer: "To hell with the mission!" and spat a mouthful of tobacco juice towards the missionary.

The following September the missionary returned to conduct the exercises in some of the neighboring parishes. As he was approaching his destination he noticed a young man give his seat to a woman who had entered, and start for the other coach. A moment later another woman, who sat facing the door, screamed, "Jack — has fallen off the train!" The missionary hastened to notify the conductor. Some time elapsed before the conductor was found. More time passed while he cross-questioned the woman who had witnessed the accident. In the meantime the train was speeding onward over the plains of Iowa.

After much confusion and delay, the order was finally given for the train to return. Slowly it backed up, while men searched among the weeds and bushes by the wayside. The missionary recalled his chance acquaintance and resolved to do what he could for Jack —. Taking his holy oils he went to the rear platform of the train. At last he spied the body. In passing from one coach to the other Jack had paused to emit a mouthful of tobacco juice. A jolt of the train at that instant had caused him to lose his balance and plunge headforemost into space. Unfortunately he

landed with his head on a rock and was instantly killed. When found his body was cold in death. Friends related that he had repeatedly expressed his sorrow for neglecting the mission in his home parish, and that he had gone to the city this day to buy a suit of clothes in which to make the next mission.

"Poor Jack!" remarked the missionary when he heard this. "Let us pray that God have mercy on his soul."

"GO TO DAN LOGUE AT ONCE"

FATHER O'HARA had spent a busy day, and planned to have a good night's rest. He had recently come to——, Ia., and had found many things to absorb his zealous attention. Fatigued with the labors of the day, he retired at an early hour and soon was sound asleep. Suddenly he was aroused as though someone had touched him. "Go to Dan Logue at once!" he thought he heard a voice say, and so sat up in bed. After listening for a while, he concluded it was all a dream and composed himself for sleep again. "Go to Dan Logue at once!" the voice repeated, and Father O'Hara was wide awake.

The new pastor had heard of Dan Logue, the owner of the brickyard on the outskirts of the town, but had not regarded him as a member of his flock. With a silent prayer to Our Lady for guidance in answering the unusual summons, he made a hasty preparation to minister the consolations of our faith to the dying man, and stepped out into the night. "Is that you Father O'Hara?" asked a man who drove up to the gate as the pastor passed through it. "I have come to bring you to Dan Logue at once." "Thank you," replied Father O'Hara as he seated himself in the buggy. "I was just on my way there. Make haste, and tell me about the sick man as we go."

Dan Logue had emigrated as a young man and eventually settled in _____. Though he was a man of ability he had had no opportunity of attending school as a boy, and was too busy after coming to America to make up for this loss. On his way westward he learned to make brick, and used his knowledge to advantage when he arrived in Iowa. In a few years he thus became one of the leading men of his community.

Though Dan Logue was a religious man he was ignorant of many of the laws and practices of his Church, and unfortunately felt an antipathy for Father Burns from their first meeting. There was no friction between them, however, until Dan Logue sought to make arrangements for the marriage of his daughter to take place on St. Patrick's day. Father Burns informed his visitor that he did not solemnize marriages during the holy season of Lent, and unhappily added that those who remained in wilful ignorance of the laws of the Church might as well stay at home. From that day Dan Logue no longer assisted at Mass, though he encouraged his family to attend, but joined in the daily recitation of the Rosary and the Litany at home.

During the twenty years that elapsed since the marriage of Biddle Logue, many changes took place in _____. Dan Logue did not change, however, and was gradually regarded as a non-Catholic by all but the members of his family. Providence evidently made allowance for his ignorance, and was mindful of the daily prayer of Dan Logue in granting him the opportunity of receiving the Sacraments at his death. For Father O'Hara asserted that if he had not been warned before the messenger came for him, he would not have been in time to hear Dan Logue's confession, or minister the other blessings of our religion to the dying man.

A SINGULAR CONVERSION

THE MISSION at St. Mary's church, ——, Ind., was well attended. To accommodate the faithful, chairs had to be placed in the aisles and even in the sanctuary. Wilbur Hopkins, president of the local branch of the Holy Name Society, and chief usher in the church, deserved much credit for making the mission a success. For weeks before the exercises began, he invited negligent Catholics and well-disposed non-Catholics to make the mission. While introducing a prospective convert, Mr. Hopkins begged leave to present his wife to the missionary at some convenient hour.

"Father, this is my wife, Mrs. Hopkins," he said with pride when they called, "the one next to God to whom I owe the gift of the true faith." "I am pleased to meet you, Mrs. Hopkins," cordially said the missionary, "but I must confess my surprise to learn that so zealous a man as your husband is a convert. May I ask how you brought about his conversion, Mrs. Hopkins?" "By pounding some sense into him with a broom!" she calmly replied, and then both husband and wife laughed like two happy children, while the missionary in his surprise looked from one to the other for an explanation.

"Fannie, let me tell Father how it happened," begged Mr. Hopkins, and proceeded to tell the story of his singular conversion. "Though my parents were respectable people," he began, "they were not church members, and so permitted me to grow up in ignorance of God and of my obligations towards Him. Being obliged to work hard as a boy, I was saved from the temptations of youth but had occasion to learn much of the pitfalls of life before I became a young man. I therefore resolved to marry a pure, pious woman when I would settle down. Fannie was my ideal, and I was fortunate in winning her, for she

has surpassed my expectations during the eighteen years we have lived together. Of course, I signed the necessary promises and we were married by the priest. In accordance with my promises I gave her a free hand in the practice of her religion and the education of the children for twelve years. During that time her exemplary conduct was a constant object lesson as well as a standing invitation for me to embrace her religion. As I cherished my liberty, however, I turned a deaf ear to the promptings of grace, and resolved to rebel against the order of things at the first opportunity. That opportunity presented itself when Fannie was cleaning house six years ago. She had taken down the crucifixes and holy pictures for the cleaning and now begged me to help her in replacing them. 'We will put an end to this nonsense!' I exclaimed with an air of decision I did not possess, and threw the crucifix she had handed me through an open window out upon the lawn. In her righteous indignation Fannie exclaimed, 'You bone-head,' and seizing the broom hit me over the head with it until I begged her pardon and promised amendment. I was ashamed of my base and insincere conduct and resolved then and there to become a Catholic. Fannie's conduct on that occasion was sufficient evidence of the genuineness of her religion for me."

JOHNNIE'S ATONEMENT

"THE SUN of domestic happiness does not shine in homes where Christ and His Church are not loved," remarked Father Hogan to the children of his catechism class one day. After school Johnnie Stephens called on his pastor and asked: "What can I do to make my home happy, Father? Papa never prays, but curses much around the house. Mama is

much interested in shows and parties, but takes no interest in the Church. Both quarrel much, and seldom go to Mass with me on Sundays." "You might try to make up for their negligence, Johnnie," kindly replied the pastor, as he patted the boy on the head. "Say nothing to any one about it for the present," he then added, "and after a while I will call on your parents."

Mr. and Mrs. Stephens were a restless couple. Though they possessed means, they were dissatisfied. Mr. Stephens was ambitious to make more money, while Mrs. Stephens spent it lavishly in scaling the social ladder. From the time they made the world their God they became so selfish that Johnnie was the only bond that held them together. As he was a delicate child, they sent him to the neighboring Catholic school, where the sisters were kind, and the children had the reputation of being more refined than at the public school. In religion Johnnie found something for which his heart craved. He was in his third year at school, and a member of the First Communion class.

With a seriousness becoming a riper age, Johnnie acted on the suggestion of his pastor. After saying his own morning and night prayers, he repeated them for his father and mother, and never omitted the act of contrition for the faults they might have committed. Besides attending Mass on Sundays he began to hear Mass on week days to atone for the Masses his parents had neglected. As his parents were preoccupied in their own affairs they did not advert to Johnnie's conduct until his mother missed him one morning. "Mama, I am praying for you and papa," he explained, "and hope you will receive with me on my Communion day."

During the retreat in preparation for the happy event, Father Hogan again urged the children to invite the members of their families to receive with them. "Whatever favor you ask of Jesus at your First

Communion you will surely receive," he said, "especially if you offer Him something dear to yourselves in token of your appreciation." When Johnnie invited his parents to receive with him, he was rudely told it would be enough if he prayed for them. With a heavy heart he, therefore, approached the altar and received his Lord and God. Having made a fervent act of love, he prayed: "Dearest Jesus, I beg for the conversion of my parents, and I offer my life in atonement for their sins."

Johnnie Stephens' offering was accepted before his petition was granted. In a short time he became dangerously ill and was given up by the doctor. At the suggestion of his pastor the boy told his parents of the offering he had made of himself for their conversion. At this revelation his mother fell in a dead faint and his father stared at him in abject horror. "Dearest Jesus," he prayed with his dying breath, "teach papa and mama to love Thee and Thy Church so that the sun of happiness may ever shine in their home." Though lonesome at times, Mr. and Mrs. Stephens have since found the happiness which the world had refused them. They are daily communicants today, and take pleasure in assisting Father Hogan in his works of zeal and charity.

AN AMPLE APOLOGY

THE BISHOP of a diocese found it advisable to make certain changes among the clergy. In one of the parishes Mr. McNichols, the mayor of the town, was a bosom friend of the pastor and a member of his church committee. When the changes were announced the mayor thought his friend had been wronged and refused to permit the new pastor to hold services in the church. As most of the parishioners

sided with the mayor, they remained without regular services for several years.

At this stage the missionary was invited to establish peace and harmony in the parish. He began his labors by sending a personal invitation to the heads of families, and thus succeeded in having a fair attendance at the opening of the mission. By kindness, tact, and personal sacrifice he then sought to clear up misunderstandings and to stimulate the sincerity and good will of his hearers. By the blessing of God and the co-operation of the parishioners the mission eventually became so great a success that all Catholics within a radius of twenty-five miles approached the Sacraments.

When the exercise came to a close, Mr. McNichols insisted on carrying the missionary's suitcase to the train, while the rest of the parishioners followed them in procession. "Mr. McNichols, you have acted nobly during the mission," remarked the missionary to the mayor as they proceeded towards the station, "and whatever wrong you may have done in the past you have rectified during this week." "Thank you, Father," replied the mayor, "there is great consolation in that assurance." "As the Saviour said to the young man in the Gospel, however," proceeded the missionary, "so I say to you, Mr. McNichols, one thing remains for you to do before you are a perfect Christian."

Here the mayor paused and said with decision: "Name it, Father, and I will gladly do it." "You told me how you treated the young priest who came here as a stranger to minister to the people," continued the missionary. "I know you acted with a good intention in wronging him. He does not know, and like ourselves is human. Kindness will encourage him to sacrifice himself for his flock, while injustice may chill his zeal and cripple his usefulness in the ministry. Would it, therefore, be too much to tell him you are

sorry when you meet him?" "I will gladly do that at the first opportunity, Father," replied the mayor. "You will have that opportunity this morning," concluded the missionary, "for I received a telegram from him an hour ago in which he said he hoped to meet me on this train."

When the train came to a stop the young priest alighted. "Father, shake hands with Mr. McNichols," said the missionary, after greeting the young priest. "I am pleased to meet you, Mr. McNichols," said the young priest cordially, "and glad to hear you have had a fine mission." "And I," replied the mayor as he fell on his knees, "wish to beg your pardon for the way I treated you the first time you came to town, I am sorry, very sorry, Father, and in token of forgiveness I ask you to make my home your home whenever you come again." With tears coursing down his cheeks the young priest affectionately embraced the mayor and promised to call on him. The cheers of the people drowned the "All aboard!" of the conductor. "God bless you, Mr. McNichols," said the missionary, as he warmly shook the mayor's hand, "you have made this a most memorable day in my life."

THE BANSHEE

AFTER preaching a mission in a certain town of Iowa, the missionary went into the country to minister the consolations of our holy religion to twenty-five families. In the pioneer days they had built a little church on an acre of ground and hoped it would become the center of the community. As time went on, however, both the railroad and the state highway avoided the spot, and so St. Patrick's church stands isolated to this day on a side road in the midst of a prosperous locality. On three sides, the little

frame church is surrounded by stately evergreens, and in its shadow rest the mortal remains of the faithful who have died in the Lord.

Having promised to keep the Blessed Sacrament in the church during the exercises, the missionary decided to sleep in the sacristy, for the nearest family lived a mile away. The very first night he was disturbed by a strange noise in the churchyard. "Ooh! Ooh! Ooh!" a shrill voice cried. "Confound the screech-owl," muttered the missionary. "Oh!" cried the voice in anguish, as though it came from one suffering an indescribable and irreparable loss. It chilled the missionary to the heart. Dressing hastily, he went to the window from which the churchyard was visible. The sky was clear and a full moon poured its mellow light through the branches of the evergreens, and formed fantastic figures among the tombstones.

As the voice repeated its heart-rending cry at regular intervals the missionary had no difficulty in locating it. In the stillness of the night he saw an object move. It was draped in black. It stood between two tombstones and swayed from side to side with the monstrous motion of a pendulum. Rooted to the spot by fear and held captive by the fascination it exercised over him, the missionary watched the phenomenon until the voice cried: "My God! Mercy!" and the figure seemed to sink into the ground between the two white tombstones.

Having said a *De Profundis* for the dead, whose remains rested in the churchyard, the missionary retired again and slept on until the sunlight streamed in through the open window. As the strange experience of the night demanded a solution, he went out to the tombstones to investigate at his earliest convenience, and he came back more mystified than ever. For the grass between the tombstones stood erect and undisturbed. Evidently neither man nor beast had passed through it during the entire season.

When the phenomenon was repeated, the missionary resolved to investigate the following night. Under the plea of lonesomeness he induced two stalwart farmers to keep him company. At the first sound of the voice the missionary aroused his companions and brought them to the window. "Oh! Oh! Oh!" repeated the voice. "The banshee! It is the banshee," sobbed the men, as they fell on their knees, trembling from head to foot. Then and there they insisted on going to Confession. After a prayer before the Blessed Sacrament the three went out to investigate. As they advanced to the tombstones they saw the figure swaying some thirty feet beyond. Holding up his mission cross, the priest addressed the apparition and said: "In the name of God I command you to tell us what you want!" Instead of an answer there came a piercing cry as of a woman falling in a faint, and the figure fell on a newly-made grave. When the men picked her up and turned her face to the light, they recognized her and gasped: "It's poor Biddie Moran, praying for her husband, who died a month ago."

A CONDUCTOR'S CONVERSION

"**P**RAYING again? I would like to know what you get out of prayer?" The priest looked up from his breviary and saw the conductor smiling pleasantly at his side. There were few passengers on the Transcontinental, and the stations in that section of the country were few and far between. With little to do, the conductor had repeatedly sought the priest's company, and had now returned for a pleasant chat.

"Every passenger in the immigrant car could answer that question," replied the priest, as he closed his book and made room for the conductor.

"Their company doesn't appeal to me," said the

conductor, still smiling. "You have given me new ideas, and have been agreeable company, so I have begun to gravitate towards you whenever I have nothing to occupy my attention."

"Thank you for the compliment," remarked the priest. "You have already solved your own difficulty," he then added, as he smiled with satisfaction. "We pray, or associate with God, to receive new light and suggestions from Him, to receive His help, and to profit by His company. You see, the very act of raising our minds and hearts to Him checks the perverse tendency of our lower nature and develops our nobler faculties. And besides, God loves us with a father's love, and is not only anxious to help us but has solemnly promised to hear our prayers."

"I never thought of prayer in that way," confessed the conductor. "I was not taught to pray as a child. Since then I have heard it said that prayer is soothing to nervous women and little children, but that men ought to be above such weakness. Thinking this the truth, I have made it the rule of my conduct. I am esteemed by my associates, try to do what is right by my family, and enjoy the fullest confidence of the officials of the company. In fact, in the whole circle of my acquaintances, I know no man that prays. And here you are like a traveler from another world advocating a theory that is unknown or ignored by the rank and file of the working men. How do you account for it?"

"Before we proceed to discuss the conduct of other men," resumed the priest, "let me ask you a few personal questions. May I take it for granted that you believe in a personal God and acknowledge your absolute dependence on His good pleasure?" The conductor nodded. "And are you willing to admit," proceeded the priest, "that this personal God not only knows all things, but understands what is best for each of us in particular? That in His goodness and

mercy He is most anxious to promote the temporal and eternal welfare of every one? Do you admit that as His creature you have an inborn obligation to adore and to thank Him, to obey Him and to make reparation for disobeying Him, to promote His glory and to ask His help in doing so? Do you realize that at the moment of death you must appear before Him in judgment, and be found worthy either of eternal happiness or of eternal misery?"

"Go easy, please," pleaded the conductor. "You are not only rushing me into new realms of thought, but make me realize that my conduct in the sight of God has a very vital bearing on my personal happiness. Viewed in that light I see that prayer is both beneficial and necessary. But it makes a man feel small. It goes against the tendency of human nature, and is calculated to rob a man of his self-reliance and efficiency. And besides, as I remarked before, I know of no man that prays."

"Do you know Jim Trahey, the engineer of the Coast Limited? He told me he never starts on a run without kneeling in his cab first to ask the protection of Providence, and has an image of his crucified Saviour sewed in the glove of his right hand so that the God-Man may aid him run his train in safety. And there is Bob Worthington, who makes the night run through here. I noticed that he kept his hand in his coat pocket when he was not punching tickets and asked him whether he had hurt his hand. He quieted my fears by showing me the rosary he was quietly praying. My dear sir, prayer corrects the perverse tendency of corrupt human nature, cures us of our pride and self-complacency, makes us realize our own limitations, and prompts us to put our trust in God's assistance."

"Why, the men you mentioned are the heads of their respective brotherhoods," remarked the conductor

with enthusiasm. "I see I have been mistaken. Teach me to pray, will you?"

"I will do more," replied the priest. "I will make a Catholic out of you, and give you a first-class ticket to heaven. It's a pleasure to meet an honest man like you."

A FRIEND IN NEED

CAPTAIN GILCHRIST is known as a gruff old seadog. During the past forty years he crossed the waters of every ocean and entered every port. He has made it a rule of his life to arrive and to depart on time, to transact the company's business faithfully, to be fair with his men, to keep his own counsel, and to let others manage their own affairs. In consequence, he was esteemed by his superiors and loved by his men, but was regarded as studiously reserved by some, who surmised that he sought to forget or to conceal a chapter of his earlier life.

The Samona was a day out from Sydney, evenly plowing her way through a calm sea, en route for San Francisco, and Captain Gilchrist was on her foredeck, surveying the horizon, when a dapper young man approached him and said: "We are a long way from dear old St. Louis, captain, and I would give one hundred dollars to be there today." "Why the homesickness for St. Louis, son?" inquired Captain Gilchrist as he surveyed his visitor leisurely. "Four reasons," replied the other laughing, "a darling wife and three affectionate kiddies!" "Congratulations," said the captain, as he shook the man's hand. "Long ago I dreamed of just such scenes in St. Louis," he went on to confess, to his own surprise, "but they were never realized, because the girl I loved proved false to me by going out with another, when she was engaged to me." "Are you from St. Louis, too?" exclaimed

the young man. "I am Frank Tully, agent for the International Harvester Company. Captain, this is the anniversary of my wedding. Can you forget your old sore long enough to help me celebrate by having dinner with me?"

Thus it happened that Captain Gilchrist surprised the crew of the Samona by dining with Mr. Tully. But, as this happened repeatedly afterwards, they finally concluded that Mr. Tully must be some close relative of the captain. Upon closer acquaintance, the two men found they held many recollections in common. Both grew up in St. Bridget's parish. Both were graduates from the Christian Brothers' college. Both played ball, swam, hunted and skated in the same places, as boys. The captain, especially, had many questions to ask, and was surprised to learn how the city had expanded and grown westward. But there was one person, still vividly enshrined in his recollections, about whom he did not venture to inquire, though he censured himself now for condemning her on the word of another, and for departing from the city without leaving any clue behind.

The Samona was scheduled to stop forty-eight hours at Hawaii, and arrived about noon on Friday. Among the first to go on shore was Mr. Tully. He had formed the habit in his youth of visiting the Blessed Sacrament daily, and had kept up this beautiful practice inculcated by Brother Justin. In fact, he was convinced by experience that daily Mass, frequent Communion, and these daily visits contributed much to that well balanced character which the officials of his company prized in him. Upon landing in a strange town, therefore, Mr. Tully made it a rule to inquire at his earliest opportunity for the nearest Catholic church, to visit the Blessed Sacrament and to pray the rosary.

While the rest of the passengers were still asleep, Mr. Tully again left the boat on Saturday morning,

and returned in time for breakfast. "Good morning, Mr. Tully, where have you been so early?" asked Captain Gilchrist, as he saw his friend come up the gangway. "I assisted at Mass and received Communion, captain," explained Mr. Tully, in a matter of fact way. "I beg your pardon for not inviting you to come with me," he added, when he saw the startled look of the captain. The grizzly face of the captain was contracted into a frown before he replied, "I haven't been to church or to the Sacraments since I left St. Louis, I am ashamed to confess. But I have been thinking, since I met you, that I would take a vacation when we reach port and find out what became of my old sweetheart, Kittie Brady." As Mr. Tully now stared at him in utter astonishment, the captain eagerly inquired: "Do you know her?" "Indeed I do," replied Mr. Tully, smiling, "she is my wife's maiden aunt, and became a mother to her when her own mother died. She told us that she met the man of her choice many years ago, was true to him, but had lost sight of him unexpectedly. I will introduce you to her in due time," he then added, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye, "provided you go to confession this afternoon, and to Holy Communion tomorrow." "It's a bargain," exclaimed the captain, as they shook hands and went in to breakfast.

HER MOTHER'S MIRROR

SOME years ago Mary Mildred Moore entered a Catholic academy as a boarder. Endowed by nature with a good constitution and pleasant features, she had always been considered a beautiful child. Through the vigilance and piety of her mother, however, Mary Mildred never discovered this fact until she was sixteen years of age. At home she had been

assistant housekeeper, and learned the art of domestic economy under the loving supervision of a sensible, Catholic mother. Was there ever a girl proud of the shapely hands that washed the dishes three times a day? Or vain about her looks when her face was covered with healthy perspiration as she stood at the washtub, or scrubbed the floor on her knees? And both these exercises were emphasized in the course of calisthenics in Mary Mildred's home.

Besides being blessed with sensible parents, Mary Mildred had the good fortune of being reared in a thoroughly Catholic atmosphere. When she was two years old she had already learned to bless herself and to lisp the "Hail Mary," and, by means of the crucifix and the holy pictures that adorned the walls of her home, she was taught the chief mysteries of her religion and imbued with a spirit of faith before she arrived at the use of reason. As she was born in a non-Catholic community, Mary Mildred had not the advantages of a parochial school education, but her mother sought to supply this defect by her vigilance, her precept, and especially by her example, until she could send her children to a convent school.

Mary Mildred's departure for the academy was a source of great joy to her mother. In her simple piety this good woman not only felt confident the good sisters would keep her child from all evil influences, but would make of her a valiant woman that would rival the one depicted in the Sacred Scriptures. At the academy Mary Mildred soon discovered to her surprise that the discipline was milder than in her home, that the good sisters could be imposed upon far easier than her mother, and that only a few of the girls were imbued with a spirit of faith, and that some of them had no religion whatever.

Having survived her spell of homesickness and become acquainted with the good sisters and her companions, Mary Mildred felt at home in the academy,

and soon began to grow plump as a squab and to bloom like an American beauty. But only after her companions publicly admired her looks and enumerated her charms, did Mary Mildred consider her beauty as her own and not as a natural gift of God. Desirous, therefore, of admiring herself at her leisure, she begged her mother to send her a tiny pocket mirror in her Christmas box.

In due time Mary Mildred received a large box filled with various useful articles. In the middle of the box she found three small boxes, each securely tied and inscribed in her mother's handwriting. On the first she read: "This will show you what you seem to be." Hastily she opened it and to her disgust found that it contained a mirror twice the size of her hand. After pouting in silence for a few moments, Mary Mildred took up the mirror and leisurely admired herself as reflected on its surface. Reassured, she now took up the second box. On it her mother had written: "This will show you what you will be." In vain Mary Mildred tried to guess what it might contain. Upon opening it and removing the wrapping paper she held an ivory paperweight in her hands that had been carved artistically into a miniature skull and cross-bones. This symbol of death gave her so severe a shock that she wept bitterly, and prayed to our Lady to protect her from the vanities of the world.

After finally drying her tears, she took up the third box in a spirit of resignation and read: "This will show you what you ought to be." With a sigh and some misgivings Mary Mildred opened it and to her delight found a little statue of our Lady. This she hugged and kissed with childish delight. When she eventually recovered her senses, Mary Mildred realized that her dear mother had discovered her evil tendency and made use of these means to teach her a salutary lesson. On her knees she then thanked God for having

given her so good a mother, and resolved to keep this Christmas present constantly before her eyes. Later on she had reason to thank God for having preserved her from the vanity and flattery of a foolish world, which she first encountered within the hallowed precincts of convent walls.

A PROFESSION OF FAITH

MARGARET REDMOND, the stenographer, entered the office a little later than usual on Ash Wednesday morning. A titter went around, when, on taking off her hat, the clerks caught a glimpse of her forehead. There, startlingly prominent, because of the clear and sanitary whiteness of her skin, was a blotch of soot or ashes. Van Seever, the general secretary, was fond of her and anxious to spare her feelings. Not venturing to speak of her blemish, he gazed at her to attract her attention, and then rubbed his own forehead vigorously. Margaret smiled, and her eyes danced merrily as she said aloud: "I know all about it, Mr. Van Seever. These are the blessed ashes I received at church this morning."

Van Seever stared at Margaret in bewilderment, while the silence in the office served as a general question. "Why, this is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the holy season of Lent," said Margaret, "the day on which we Catholics receive these ashes to remind us that we are dust and unto dust we must return." "What a beautiful ceremony," stammered Van Seever, as he stared at her blankly for a moment, and then turned to look out of the window.

As he stood there Van Seever shuddered with horror at the thought that a sane, accomplished and lovely woman of twenty-two could take pleasure in the

thought that she was "dust, and unto dust must needs return." "What moral courage she must possess," he said to himself, "to stand thus by her own grave, and in spirit to look with complacency on the fact that her pretty, rounded form, her smiling red lips, her dimpled hands, her smooth cheeks, her large blue eyes are turning into dust!" "What power," he asked himself, "can make her so indifferent to the views of ordinary mortals, that she takes pleasure in the thought of bidding farewell to this glorious world and all the things she holds most dear?"

Van Seever had received a godless education in his youth, and had always lived too busy a life to become the slave of vice. By his talent, efficiency and capacity for work he had mastered the insurance business and improved the methods of handling the business in the Denver office of the International Insurance Company. In his ambition for material promotion he had given little attention to his spiritual development, though he admitted the necessity of religion for man's ultimate happiness. Among the church members that he had thus far met, he had found none that possessed a spiritual power superior to the human. So Margaret Redmond was a revelation to him.

"I must admit the supernatural in her conduct," he finally confessed. "She takes a divine, an eternal view of life, and in her Church somehow not only finds the means to rise to a superior level, but to live there with the heedless indifference of a loving child. And if that is so, then her Church must be divine, Christ, her Founder, must be divine, and it is my duty in the sight of God to use her means to live a divine life. Yes, Margaret Redmond is my motive of credibility. I believe what she believes, because God has revealed it in her life, and He, the Truth, cannot deceive." "I believe! Lord," he added humbly as he struggled with his feelings, "help Thou my unbelief."

A VOLUNTEER, OR A WIFE'S INFLUENCE

AT the National Soldiers' home in southern California, Gen. Silas Jewell is revered and loved by all the men. The general was born in a cabin on the western frontier seventy-six years ago, and grew up without any knowledge of God or religion. At the outbreak of the Civil war he volunteered as a private, and distinguished himself on many a battlefield. The authorities recognized the ability and valor of Private Jewell, and rewarded his gallant services by repeatedly promoting him, so that he was mustered out as a division general of the volunteer forces.

After his return to private life the general had an opportunity of studying the true faith. With his usual generosity he embraced the truth and became, as he expresses it, a volunteer in the service of the Lord. Upon the death of his wife the general's object in life was to give his son a thorough education, and when this was accomplished he became an inmate of "the home." Even here the sterling qualities of the volunteer of the Lord were soon recognized, and he rapidly rose in the esteem and affection of his comrades. By universal consent General Jewell is today acknowledged to be the model of the faithful, the information bureau of the Church for all striving after the better things, and the sympathetic friend of all his comrades.

This "volunteer of the Lord" attracted my attention on the first day of a mission I recently preached in the home, as I had ample time to study his conduct. Before the whistle blew at half past five in the morning, the general, with several devoted comrades, did sentinel duty before the chapel door. Even before the lights were on, they saluted the Master in the tabernacle. The general was absorbed in his devotions during the sacrifice of the Mass, and daily received

Holy Communion. Not only was he present at every exercise of the mission, but also spent the greater part of the day in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. He was modest in his manner, thoughtful and kind towards every one, and seemed to have learned from the Master to be meek and humble of heart.

My desire to study the general more closely was gratified one morning as I met him picking flowers for the altar. When I greeted him according to his age and merit, the old gentleman became confused and expostulated with me, saying: "Father, the men think I am better than I am. I am a great sinner. And I don't understand how God could be so good to me, or why my comrades are so kind to me." "Were you born here?" I inquired. "I was born and grew up among the cattle on the plains of Kansas," he replied, and proceeded to give me some idea of the hardships of pioneer life. He concluded by stating that when the Union was in danger he volunteered his services and fought throughout the Civil War.

"General, were you ever married?" I then asked. "Shortly after I had been mustered out of service," he resumed somewhat bashfully. "I met a modest little girl that attracted me very much. I had several skirmishes with her parents before I succeeded in speaking to her. She told me she was a Catholic and would marry no one but a Catholic. Observing my ignorance she proceeded to tell me of the infinite goodness of God and of our obligation to know and serve Him. She then explained how the Son of God became man to save us from the slavery of hell. I remarked that I would not have done that for the slaves of the South, and then and there volunteered for His service. When the priest came again to the settlement he baptized me, and we were married.

"Agnes often protested that she was ignorant of many things, but I haven't begun to practise half the

things she taught me by her example. She was more than a guardian angel to me, father, but too good for a cowboy like me, and so the Lord took her to heaven. Though I miss her more and more as time goes on, I daily thank God for entrusting me to her influence for a few short years. She left me a baby boy with his mother's amiable disposition. He is now a Jesuit missionary among the Indians of Alaska. I feel I haven't long to live. I daily volunteer in the Lord's service, as Agnes taught me, and try to do my bit to make Him known and loved, but I am a great sinner, and unfit for heaven. That is why I come to the chapel to coax our Lord and His blessed Mother in Their mercy to forgive the faults of all the men here, and to find a little place in heaven for me because I am dying to see Them and Agnes. Do you think I have a chance?"

"I assure you in the name of God that you have," I replied, as I moved on, feeling ashamed of myself in his presence.

THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL AND OUIJA

DURING the war a number of Denver men met frequently at the home of an apostate Catholic to obtain uncensored news by means of the Ouija board. In the beginning their efforts met with indifferent success. As time went on, however, and the men surrendered themselves more and more to its influence, Ouija became more and more loquacious and even made some startling revelations.

A very important session was scheduled for Christmas night. On the preceding day the apostate's only

child, a girl sixteen years old, whose name is Elsie, returned to the city for her Christmas vacation. Even though Elsie's mother was negligent in the practice of her religion, she had insisted on giving her daughter a Catholic education, and as she herself, when a girl, had attended a school conducted by the Ursuline sisters, she had prevailed on her husband to send Elsie to the Ursuline academy of a neighboring state.

Instead of giving a prominent place on their curriculum to the branches that puff up the mind, but have no practical value for time or eternity, the good sisters of the institution emphasized the theory and practice of religion as the important branch taught in their institution. Elsie entered into the spirit of the institution upon her admission, grew in it day by day during the six years she spent with the good sisters, and had become the idol of her teachers and associates.

When the men assembled as usual on Christmas night, Elsie accompanied her mother to the session, imagining in her simplicity that she was going to help mamma entertain papa's friends. To the surprise and disappointment of the manipulators, Ouija seemed paralyzed, for it made no move to answer the various questions prepared for its solution.

Finally, after much coaxing, some prodding and a few muttered imprecations to the men, ouija began to reply to the oft repeated question: "Why don't you answer?" For the tripod creaked, moved aimlessly about for a while, and then laboriously spelt this answer: "T-h-e w-o-m-a-n w-o-n-'-t l-e-t m-e."

The men looked defiantly about the room for the culprit. Mother and daughter were the only women visible. The mother had thus far been only a spectator, but had repeatedly taken part in previous sessions; thus all eyes were soon focused on the daughter for an explanation. All the while Elsie stared vacantly

at the assembly in her bewilderment. The mother was the first to solve the mystery. She thought of the miraculous medal, which her daughter always wore suspended from a tiny chain around her neck, and exclaimed: "Elsie, it is your sodality medal," as she pointed it out to the men. "Take it off instantly!" commanded her father, and Elsie rushed from the room.

As soon as the girl had departed the men resumed their session. Ouija seemed to have recovered its wits instantly. It promptly answered every question and even volunteered much additional information. The men were too absorbed in their communications to notice Elsie's return as she tiptoed to the center of the room. Her lips were set, her eyes flashed, and two pink spots glowed on her pale cheeks as she entered. Just as her mother smiled her approval on her daughter for removing the objectionable medal, Elsie withdrew her right hand from behind her slender form, and raised a bottle of holy water above the circle. "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, begone Satan!" she said with decision, as she liberally sprinkled the Ouija board and the assembled men with the blessed fluid.

In an instant confusion reigned supreme in the assembly. The surprise of the first moment gave way to fear when the simple exorcism of the pious girl was followed by a cracking noise on the table around which the session was held. When the men recovered from the shock they found that the tripod had crumpled into bits under their hands, and that the Ouija board was split into kindling wood. "That settles me and Ouija," remarked Elsie's father with determination. "You gentlemen may do as you like; but I am going to make my peace with God before the New Year."

SEALED DIRECTIONS

MARY BROWN was a young woman of twenty-one. In a spirit of faith and generosity she had followed the directions of her confessor since her childhood days. At home she had become indispensable to her mother, and in the parish she was universally esteemed for her modesty, charity and genuine piety. Mary had thus far been so perfectly content with her lot that she heartily detested "the world" without ever coming into actual contact with it. It was at this stage that the first serious temptation entered into her uneventful life.

As she was leaving the church one fine summer morning, Miss Brown met Myrtle White, a sodality member, and was invited to accompany her and her mother on a picnic for the day. "We have room for one in the auto," explained Myrtle, "and will leave in one hour. 'Phone as soon as you have asked your mother, and we will call on the way and pick you up." Strange as it may seem, Mary had been so completely a home girl that she had never been in an automobile, or been at a picnic. She was delighted with the invitation and easily obtained her mother's consent. On the way Miss Brown shared the front seat with Bob White, a handsome, charming young man of twenty-five, but unfortunately a grass-widower, whose adventurous young wife had eloped with another man.

Under the influence of Bob White's ready wit and genuine kindness, Mary soon lost her reserve and thoroughly enjoyed the outing. While in Bob's company, an indefinable sweetness seemed to ravish her heart that caused her to linger in his presence. It gave her a new and fascinating view of life. Bob experienced the same sensation, and soon began to contrast the designing ways of the woman he had married with the charming qualities of Miss Brown.

He was so absorbed in these thoughts that he expressed them to Mary when the opportunity presented itself. Though confused in mind, Mary was sympathetic and replied that she could not understand how any woman could treat Bob as his wife had done.

From the day of the picnic, Mary Brown was a changed woman. Instead of praying her Rosary, she retired thinking of "poor Bob." Though she still attended Mass, she abstained from receiving Holy Communion, and spent much of her time in church in observing how other women were dressed. As the days passed by, Mary and Bob drifted closer and closer together. Mary turned a deaf ear to the remonstrations of her parents, and maintained that their meeting was brought about by some mysterious dispensation of Providence.

When the remote preparations for their marriage had been made, Mary called on her confessor one day to acquaint him with her intentions. The priest listened patiently to Mary until she had finished. With a sigh, he then wrote something on a sheet of paper, enclosed it in an envelope, sealed it and handed it to Mary, saying: "Go once more to the shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, where you have often prayed with childlike devotion, there read this note word for word, and then you may do what you please."

With a heavy heart, Mary did as directed. She knelt before the image of Our Lady and read the following words: "My dear mother Mary, I have come to bid thee and thy Son farewell forever. I have decided to damn my immortal soul by living a life of adultery. Before I depart, I wish to thank thee for the affection and the graces thou hast lavished upon me in the past. And in conclusion, I beg that my name be stricken from the Book of Life."

These words pierced Mary's innermost soul. By the help of Our Lady she saw the horrible delusion into

which Satan had led her, and began to weep bitterly. "No! no! dear Mother," she exclaimed, "I cannot leave thee! I must not crucify thy Son! I do not wish to damn my immortal soul! Do not blot my name out of the Book of Life! A thousand times rather do I renounce this man forever. Help me to control my heart, to do penance for my sins and repair the scandal I have given, and I will consecrate myself to thy service forever."

HIS MOTHER'S ROSARY

GENERAL ALPHONS DEMERE was killed in the battle of Verdun. He was the only son of a pious mother, who died when the general was a boy. Among the devout practices she taught him as a child, was a love for the Devotion of the Rosary, which she performed daily with him. On her deathbed the mother gave her rosary beads to her son, and said: "Alphons, treasure these beads as the most precious keepsake of your loving mother, and continue to recite them daily!" Sobbing with emotion, the boy promised, affectionately kissed his mother, and received her parting blessing.

Unfortunately, Alphons kept only half of his promise. As he grew up, he entered a military school to prepare himself for his chosen profession. Under infidel professors and among indifferent associates, he grew negligent in his religious practices, and gradually dropped them entirely. Throughout his life, however, Alphons treasured the remembrance of his mother, and always carried her rosary beads on his person. And in answer to her prayer, or through the special protection of our Lady, whom he had served in the days of his youth, he always abstained from the dissipation of his comrades.

When the war broke out, the talents, and bravery of Alphons were given ample scope for development. Having repeatedly distinguished himself, he was rapidly promoted and became general of a division at the age of twenty-three. In the terrific assaults on Verdun, General Demere was ordered to lead a counter attack and recover an advantageous position. While the artillery was preparing the way, the general spread out his blanket to secure a little needed rest. As he lay on the ground, he chanced to put his hand into his pocket. To his surprise, his fingers touched and drew forth his mother's rosary beads.

Instead of sleeping, the general now thought of his mother and of the scenes of his childhood days, until his whole life passed as a panorama before his mental vision. When he recalled the days on which he used to kneel in prayer with his mother, he became thoroughly ashamed of himself for having neglected to fulfill her dying request. "You were happier then than you are now," he said to himself. "My, how you have changed! What may your mother in heaven be thinking of you?" The thought that most tormented him arose from the fact that he, who prided himself on being a man of honor, had broken his promise to his dying mother. Tormented with remorse, he sought to make amends by kneeling and trying to pray the Rosary.

It was thus the chaplain found the general as he made the rounds of the trench to minister to the men. "Do you wish to go to confession, General?" he asked when he saw the commander kneeling in prayer. "It is impossible for me to make my confession now, Father," replied the general with emotion, "but I will go just as soon as we have finished this attack." With the aid and encouragement of the zealous chaplain, however, the general made a sincere confession of his entire life. He kissed his beads again and again, and

humbly thanked God for the grace he had so unexpectedly received.

When the signal was given to advance, the general led his men to the attack with an enthusiasm that was contagious. Irresistibly the French bore down the spirited and tenacious opposition of the Germans as they advanced far beyond the crest of the hill and secured the lost position. But their valiant leader fell, a victim of the deadly fire of the enemy. After the engagement his followers found General Demere's body, his left hand still clasping his mother's rosary beads to his breast.

OUR LADY CONVERTS AN APOSTATE

EIGHTEEN years ago an old man took sick in Denver who had apostatized from the Faith as a young man. Perhaps on account of the violence that he had to exercise in stifling the remorse of his conscience, he had grown to hate the religion of his youth. He certainly detested everything connected with its practice. Fortunately, his housekeeper was a devout Catholic, who was much concerned about his spiritual condition. When the doctor informed her of the serious condition of his patient, she hastened to inform a priest of the old man's condition and urge him to do what he could to prepare him for eternity.

"What do YOU want here?" impatiently demanded the old man as the priest entered the sick room. "Oh, I heard you were not well," kindly replied the priest, "and so dropped in to see you. To visit the sick, you know, is an act of charity." Reluctantly the old man then invited the priest to be seated. But when the latter suggested the reception of the Sacraments, the old man indignantly replied: "I don't want to hear anything about them, and I beg you not to bother me in the future."

"I can do nothing with him now," sadly remarked the priest to the housekeeper, "but I will offer the Sacrifice of Mass for his conversion in the morning, and I wish you would say the rosary for the same intention." "I have been doing that," replied the housekeeper, "and I will let you know if there is any change."

Towards the end of the week the good woman appeared again at the rectory, her face radiant with happiness. "Come quickly, Father," she exclaimed, as the priest appeared, "he has asked for you!"

The old man now welcomed the priest with evident signs of pleasure. "Thank God you have come!" he said as he raised his feeble hands. "I have lived through an awful night. Even last evening I was determined not to receive the Sacraments. About 11 o'clock I fell asleep; and in my sleep I distinctly saw the Mother of God, with the Infant in her arms, standing above my bed. She shook her finger at me and cast a glance of reproach upon me that pierced my inmost soul, as if she meant to say: 'Receive the Sacraments as soon as possible, for it will soon be too late!' I awoke, trembling in every limb . . . O, Father, please help me make a good confession."

Needless to say, the old man was sincerely converted, and died with sentiments of gratitude towards the Mother of Mercy, who had thus changed his heart before he appeared before the judgment-seat of God.

"HAVE MY CHILD BAPTIZED"

"O GEORGE, don't disgrace us and run the risk of losing your own soul by entering a mixed marriage," vainly pleaded Mrs. Shields with her son. "Who will bring up your children Catholics, as I have

brought you up?" The Shields family lived on a farm and was classed among the representative Catholic ones of their locality. In spite of the opposition of his family, George was eventually married by the priest and made his home with his wife's parents. When a child was born George put off its baptism on account of opposition from his mother-in-law, and then succumbed to an attack of pneumonia. Before he breathed his last, however, he had his wife promise to bring the child up Catholic.

About six months after the death of George Shields, his pastor, Father O'Neil, attended the semi-annual conference of the clergy. Though a zealous priest, Father O'Neil was known as a wag among his clerical friends, who was bound to joke even on the most solemn occasions. At the conference he had been appointed to criticize a paper written by a brother priest on "The Influence of the Spirit World." The paper treated the subject from a Catholic standpoint, but concluded by citing the reports of various apparitions of departed souls. This gave Father O'Neil the opportunity of belittling the paper by classing the reports as fairy tales. In a spirit of mischief he then went so far as to question even the possibility of such apparitions.

When he returned from the conference Father O'Neil found an urgent sick call awaiting him. He was requested to come at once to the widow of George Shields. Knowing her to be a matter-of-fact woman he was surprised to find her in a state of great nervous excitement. In answer to his inquiry about the nature of her trouble she informed him that her husband had repeatedly appeared to her. At first Father O'Neil suspected his clerical friends of perpetrating a practical joke on him. As this seemed impossible under the circumstances, however, he accused the woman of hallucination. But Mrs. Shields adhered to her state-

ment, and said: "Why, Father, he is standing here by my bed this minute!"

By this time Father O'Neil was in earnest. "Command him in the name of God to say what he wants," he suggested. "Have my child baptized and brought up Catholic as you promised," the spirit replied in answer to his wife's command. As the priest was still skeptical, he prompted Mrs. Shields to say: "In the name of God I command you to leave a sign by which we may know that you have really been here!" The young widow had hardly given this command in the presence of her parents and Father O'Neil when she uttered a cry of pain. "Oh, my cheek! My cheek!" she exclaimed. To the surprise of all, the imprint of her husband's right hand, on which the index finger was missing, was indelibly burnt into her skin.

At the next conference of the clergy Father O'Neil publicly begged pardon for the scandal he might have given by his flippant remarks at their previous meeting, and then related the apparition of George Shields. He also stated that Mrs. Shields not only had the child baptized in compliance with her ante-nuptial promises and the request of her deceased husband, but had also taken instruction and joined the Church herself. "I have reason to hope," he added, "that her father and mother will eventually follow her example."

"I BELONG TO THE SACRED HEART"

MARY KEHOE had never thought of choosing another state in life than to serve God as a Sister of Charity. One obstacle prevented her from following her cherished desire. She was the only support of her mother. When she returned from work one day she found a visitor in the house. John Shields, an old schoolmate, the son of her mother's bosom

friend, had returned to the home of his childhood in search of a wife. The mothers had planned for the welfare of their children without consulting Mary in the matter. When she finally became aware of the object of Mr. Shield's visit, Mary called on her confessor and placed the matter before him. After listening to her with paternal sympathy, her confessor replied with deliberation, "My child, if God had destined you for the convent, he would not have burdened you with the responsibility of providing for your mother. Marry this man. Pray that God may bless you with children who will do more for His glory than you alone could do."

As Mary Kehoe had always followed the direction of her confessor in a spirit of child-like faith, she now went to the church to pray for strength to give up her personal preference and to embrace this other state in a worthy manner. "If God blesses me with children," she said to herself, "I will consecrate the girls to the Blessed Virgin and the boys to the Sacred Heart, and I will do all in my power to bring them up in the fear and the love of God."

When God blessed Mr. and Mrs. Shields with a son in due time, his mother named him John, in honor of the beloved disciple. When she brought him to church to consecrate him to the Sacred Heart, Mrs. Shields knelt before the image of our Lord in joy and gratitude. Placing her infant son in spirit in the outstretched arms of the Master, who said, "Let the little ones come unto Me," she humbly begged our Lord to accept her son as His own and to use him to promote the glory of God and the welfare of mankind.

This consecration Mrs. Shields not only renewed daily, but she also did all in her power to make her offering acceptable to God. When John was scarcely two years of age his mother told him how she had solemnly consecrated him, and encouraged him in

every way to avoid evil and to do good "because he belonged to the Sacred Heart." By frequent admonition this consecration became so thoroughly impressed on the boy's mind that Providence used it to effect the conversion of a policeman who had neglected his religion since the days of his youth. Passing in front of the Shields residence one day the officer was attracted by the child standing at the gate. Being in no hurry he paused and asked with a pleasant smile, "My boy, to whom do you belong?" "I belong to the Sacred Heart," gravely replied John as he raised his innocent blue eyes to his inquirer. "That's right," remarked the officer as he struggled to suppress the emotions which this unexpected answer occasioned. "Don't run away from the Sacred Heart when you grow up, as I did," he then added. "Then you must come back," John insisted with great earnestness, "for the Sacred Heart loves you still." This pleading was too much for the officer. "My boy, I'll come back Saturday night, so help me God," he said, as he leaned over and fondly kissed the child. "Pray for me in the meantime that the Sacred Heart will take me back."

CHARLIE'S SANDWICH

LIKE the wise woman described by Solomon, Charlie Cotter's mother knew how to combine thrift and genuine piety. When Mr. Cotter died, he left her an insurance of one thousand dollars, a rented cottage in Los Angeles, and five little children. By hard work and frugality, Mrs. Cotter managed to keep the children fed and clothed until Charlie was old enough to assume some of the responsibilities. During these years the mother instilled true piety into the hearts of her children by living a life of faith and genuine devotion. Her motto was "To do anything well you must sandwich it between two Hail Marys."

Honest little Charlie imbibed his mother's spirit at an early age, and became a great favorite at St. Mary's school. He not only led his class but also became famous as the champion pitcher of Boyle Heights. In fact, the coolness, skill and endurance of this freckled-faced, unassuming lad were so well known in local circles that the opposing team felt almost as certain of defeat as his team did of victory whenever Charlie pitched. After a brilliant victory one day Bud Parker, the pitcher of the defeated team, waited for Charlie and earnestly inquired: "How do you do it, Red? I have watched you a long time. I seem to pitch as good as you, but the boys bat me all over the field. What trick have you that I have not?" "I sandwich the ball between two Hail Marys," Charlie honestly replied.

As Bud was in an humble, receptive mood, Charlie explained what he meant by his process of sandwiching. This of course necessitated other explanations. And by the time that Charlie had solved all of Bud's difficulties he had explained the chief truths of our holy faith, the origin and significance of the Hail Mary, and the love and solicitude of the Mother of God for her children on earth. In conclusion Charlie said that he always succeeded in anything he sandwiched between two Hail Marys. Bud was so favorably impressed that he reverenced Charlie as a saint, and declared he would become a Catholic even if he never won another game.

As Bud Parker's parents had divorced and married again, he made his home with Mrs. Hawkins, a married sister. He found his sister in tears over the sudden illness of her child upon his return, but was so full of his subject that he had to tell her of Charlie's sandwich and all that he had learned about the Catholic faith. "Lillie, I am going to become a Catholic!" he declared with delight. "I too would be willing to

join," sobbed his sister, "if God would spare my darling. The doctor just left and said she would be dead in an hour." "Is she that bad?" asked Bud with evident concern. After a moment's pause he emphatically asserted: "I'll bet Charlie could cure her if he could sandwich her between two Hail Mary's," and hastened to bring him.

Without pausing to explain the nature of his distress as he ran into and out of the Cotter home, Bud gasped, "Charlie, come quick and help me." "The boy is in trouble," remarked Mrs. Cotter. "Go with him, Charlie." As the boys ran down the street to the Hawkins home, Bud explained the nature of his errand, and concluded with this profession of faith in his hero: "If you can sandwich the baby between two Hail Marys, Charlie, Lil will become a Catholic too!"

By the time the boys arrived at their destination Charlie had both prayed and planned. Having briefly explained the nature and necessity of Baptism to Mrs. Hawkins, he easily obtained her consent to baptize the sick child. While Bud procured the water and Mrs. Hawkins took up the child, Charlie knelt down and prayed a fervent Hail Mary. After the ceremony was performed he repeated this devotion. To the mother's intense delight Charlie had hardly left when the child entered into a peaceful slumber. The following morning it greeted her anxious gaze with a pleasant smile. Today both Mr. and Mrs. Hawkins as well as Bud Parker are devout Catholics.

MARY, OUR ADVOCATE WITH JESUS

AN honest Methodist met the missionary on the train one day and entered into conversation with him. After making a few commonplace remarks, he brought up the subject of religion. With the con-

fidence of all who grow up in the system of self-deification by private judgment, he said: "I consider it censurable on the part of Catholics to hope for salvation from the Virgin, and to have recourse to her in all their wants. I turn directly to my Divine Saviour, Who alone is my Mediator with God. He alone can save me and give me the grace to live a blameless life. I cannot understand how any one can be so ignorant and so foolish as to put his trust in a mere creature."

"My dear sir," replied the missionary, "I too, hope for salvation from the Son of God, and from Him alone, even as you do. For I acknowledge that not even the Blessed Virgin has power of her own to help me. There is a great difference, however, between your system of salvation and mine. You say you go directly to the Saviour in all your wants. But, let me ask, what have you to recommend you and your petitions? Perhaps your sins and human frailty? For I suppose you will admit you have faults and imperfections. Or do you think that your personal recollection and devotion will be a sufficient recommendation to ensure a cordial welcome and a favorable reply at all times? Now, I dare not close my eyes to my own unworthiness, nor dare I presume on the goodness and mercy of God. So I love to approach Jesus Christ in the company of her, who is the loveliest and dearest of God's creatures, and whom Jesus has chosen and honored as His own Mother. Let me ask you candidly, therefore, if you are looking for light, and not merely seeking to while away the time by specious arguments, whom do you think will be most graciously received by the Son? Who has the better prospect of having his petition granted?"

After a momentary reflection, the Methodist replied: "You present the matter in a new light. Undoubtedly you have the best reason to expect the most cordial

welcome from Jesus Christ when presented to Him by His own Mother, and if she recommends your petition her action ought to ensure a favorable reply. I admit that I was misinformed on this point. When I return to Oakland I will make a systematic study of Catholic doctrine, and, I promise you now, if I find the rest of the teachings of your Church as reasonable as this, I will turn and take my family with me."

"I thank you for your sincerity," replied the missionary, "and can assure you in advance of the reasonableness of our faith." After writing an introduction on his card he handed it to his Methodist friend, saying: "When you return to Oakland, take this to the rector of St. Francis de Sales' church. He will be delighted to help you. In the meantime," he concluded with a roguish twinkle, "ask the Mother to recommend the affair to her Son."

A BOUQUET OF ROSES

ROSE was born in Illinois. Her father was a prosperous merchant and her mother was a sensible and pious woman. While her father sought to surround her with the luxuries of life and gratify all her desires, her mother was solicitous to bring Rose up in the fear and the love of God. Two devotions she instilled into the heart of her child at a tender age, love for the Blessed Virgin and veneration for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. A picture of Mary at the foot of the cross in the Freeman home served as a means of fostering this spirit in the child. When Rose was scarcely two years old she paused before this picture one day and observed tears on Mary's cheeks. Hastening to her mother she caught hold of her skirt and pulled her towards the picture. "Look! Mamma, look!" she exclaimed. "Why does she cry?"

Her mother had already taught Rose her prayers but had considered her too young to grasp the details of the consoling truths of our holy religion. Now, however, she gladly availed herself of the opportunity. Taking the child in her arms she held her up so that she might observe the picture more closely. "The Mother of God is weeping because bad men nailed her Son to the cross," she then replied. "And why did God allow it?" asked the child. "Because He loved us so much that He gave us His Son Jesus to save us from sin and hell, and open to us the gates of heaven." "And did Jesus love us that much, too, and didn't His Mother want to save Him from such pain?" persisted the child, and continued with many other questions until mother and child shed copious tears of compassion as they contemplated the agony of Jesus on the cross and the sorrows of His Blessed Mother.

For weeks Rose was preoccupied and sad. Instead of amusing herself with her dolls and other childish diversions, she daily sought more information on this fascinating mystery of divine love, and often was found in tears before the picture. "Mamma," she said one day, "if only I could see Them and tell Them how much I love Them, They would feel better, wouldn't They?" So her mother took Rose to Church and showed her the beautiful shrine of our Lady and the home of Jesus in the tabernacle. This visit was a revelation and a source of new life to the child. Before they left, Rose had obtained permission to bring the flowers to the sacristan, which her mother was in the habit of sending for the decoration of the altars. She availed herself of these occasions to speak very intimately to Jesus and Mary. On one occasion the sacristan found her kneeling on the table of the high altar, pleading with Jesus in the tabernacle. "Dear Jesus, I love you so much," she said as she expanded her little hands. "So come out and talk to me. I won't let nobody hurt you."

When five years of age Rose Freeman was sent to St. Mary's school, and continued there until she graduated from the eighth grade. During these years she literally "advanced in wisdom and age, and grace with God and men." At home her mother never permitted her to indulge in the whims and inconsistencies of childhood, and at school she was observed to be a little more recollected in prayer, a little more diligent in study, and a little more thoughtful and kind when playing than other children of her age. On this account Rose became a universal favorite and exercised a salutary influence by her example in the school.

Mr. Freeman wished to make an accomplished lady of his daughter, and therefore was desirous of sending her to a fashionable boarding school at an early age. The mother, however, insisted on keeping the child under her watchful eye until she had finished the parochial school, and planned to send her to a school where she might acquire all the accomplishments of a polite education without having her religious spirit tarnished by the poisons of the world. After studying the yearbooks of various educational institutions, she finally decided to send her daughter to the Josephinum, conducted by the Sisters of Christian Charity, because this institution emphasized religion as well as the humble branches of domestic economy in its curriculum.

The day of Rose's departure was a memorable one in the family. Preparations were begun weeks in advance, and the baggage was checked the night before. The family intended to take "The Limited" at 6:30 A. M. They arrived at the station as the train pulled in. As they were about to enter, Rose burst into tears. "O papa," she exclaimed, "I must take a bouquet of red and white roses along to decorate the altars!" The father looked vexed, but said: "All right, Rose, we can wait for the local train." When

they returned to the station an hour later, it was announced that "The Limited" had been wrecked at La Grange, and that most of the passengers in the day coach had been killed or wounded.

"THE BLESSED VIRGIN SAVED ME FROM THE PEN—THE DEVIL CAN'T GET ME NOW"

EDDIE CUSHING was born in what is known as the hell-hole of Chicago. This place had been the residence district of the laboring class when the Cushings built their home, but deteriorated into a cheap rooming-house district when the city expanded, and eventually became the refuge of criminals. Before his parents could dispose of their property Eddie had grown to be twelve years of age. And though he had an ideal Catholic home in many respects, and attended the parochial school for a while, Eddie could not be kept off the streets without being locked up. Thus his kind-hearted mother and busy father had no suspicion when they moved to a more desirable locality that their son had fallen under the evil influence of older companions. In a short time Eddie disappeared as completely as though the earth had swallowed him alive, as it did Core, Dathon and Aberon in the days of Moses.

Mr. Cushing and his friends searched for the boy after work at night. Mrs. Cushing prayed on the marble floor of the church for his return until she got rheumatism, and Alice and Florence cried themselves to sleep longing for their big brother, but Eddie did not appear. After many years a detective told Mr. Cushing that Eddie had become the leader of the hell-hole gang, and that for a long time the police had been

on his trail. Whenever they were confident of his arrest, Eddie vanished, only to resume his occupation in another quarter or in another town. He thus became notorious, and, as the police could obtain no other likeness of him than his First Communion photograph, this was given the place of honor in the rogues' gallery.

One night Eddie Cushing was short of funds. Observing a man display a well-filled wallet in a cigar store, he waited for him outside and relieved him of it at the point of his gun. One of the gang had observed the act and told his comrades. They surrounded Eddie in an alley and demanded their share. Eddie asserted that as this had been a private venture there would be no share. And when they proceeded to use violence, he drew his revolver and shot his first assailant through the leg. The report of the shot following soon after the robbery, attracted a swarm of police and detectives. When they approached with drawn revolvers they found only Eddie Cushing leading his wounded comrade. To their surprise he offered no resistance, but shielded his comrade as an innocent victim of a shot intended for his unknown assailant. The following morning the papers announced in glaring headlines: "Eddie Cushing, noted outlaw, caught after a search of sixteen years."

That same morning Florence Cushing, prefect of the Children of Mary, called at the rectory to have a Mass offered for her brothers' conversion. "We have prayed the rosary for him every night since I was a child," she told the priest, with tears coursing down her pale cheeks, "and now that this terrible thing has happened mamma is heart-broken."

"Cheer up, my child," kindly said the priest. "When things seem hopeless, God's help is nigh. I will say Mass for your brother now, and see him later in the day."

Even when provided with a permit from the police magistrate, the priest had difficulty in gaining admission to the prisoner. He found Eddie standing at the window of his concrete cell vacantly gazing down on the street. Putting his arm around him, the priest said: "Would you like to be free as the sparrows in the street?" This aroused Eddie from his reverie. Thrusting the priest aside, he haughtily demanded: "What do you want here?" "You might be more civil when a friend drops in," replied the priest. "I came to help you. Eddie, you have come to the parting of the ways. Turn back before it is too late. Your poor mother is brokenhearted and your sisters are crying themselves sick. If you get out of this will you cut away from the gang and be a decent Christian?" "I will," replied Eddie with decision. "You may believe it or not, but that was the first human blood I have ever shed. It has filled me with horror and disgust for my misspent life." "Then get on your knees and make a good confession!" commanded the priest.

After making various objections, Eddie Cushing finally knelt down beside the priest, seated on a prison stool, and made a sincere confession. Having given his penitent absolution and salutary advice, the priest drew forth his beads and asked: "Do you know what this is?" "A rosary," promptly replied Eddie. "My mother taught me to say it." "It is yours," said the priest, and moved by a sudden impulse he added: "If you say it every day you are in jail, the Blessed Virgin will save you from the penitentiary." Eddie grasped it eagerly, and, when the priest departed, was kneeling in the corner of his cell repeating the prayer he had learned as a child from his mother.

Before setting out on a tour of missions, the priest had an interview with the prosecuting attorney, and was assured that if Eddie Cushing's conduct in jail would be exemplary, he would be paroled. When the trial came up, however, a young assistant was given

charge of the prosecution. He pictured Eddie's life in the darkest colors. And as Eddie had no witnesses, and was too dumbfounded to testify in his own behalf, he pleaded guilty. The judge reserved ten days' time to pronounce the sentence. In the meantime the priest returned and called on his penitent. "You said the Blessed Virgin would save me from the pen," sobbed Eddie, as he cast his beads on the pavement, "and now I am to be sent up for fifteen years." "Your part of the bargain was to say the rosary daily as long as you are in jail," quietly replied the priest. "If you haven't done so today, Eddie, you better pick up the beads." After Eddie had done this, the priest resumed in a gentle tone: "In case the Blessed Virgin does help you to go free, will you promise her to recite the rosary daily, to go to Mass on Sundays with your mother, and to receive the Sacraments on the first Friday of every month?" And when Eddie had promised, the priest again left him praying the rosary.

Directing his steps to the office of the judge who had presided at the trial, the priest eloquently pleaded Eddie's cause and concluded by asking that he be paroled on a suspended sentence. "And will you be responsible for him if he goes back to his old ways?" asked the judge in a tone of finality. "Here is my card," quietly replied the priest. "If you turn Eddie Cushing over to me, and I am unable to produce him when you want him, you may send me to the penitentiary in his stead." "I will take you at your word," replied the judge, and proceeded to fill out the necessary document. This the priest took to Eddie's mother and said: "Here is the answer to your prayers. It is your privilege to bring your son home."

Eddie Cushing was true to his word. As his conduct during his six months in jail had won the esteem of the officials, so his integrity and piety during the six remaining years of his life edified the community and brought joy to his family. When the priest then

again came to the city in the discharge of his missionary labors, his first visitor was Florence Cushing. She announced that Eddie was dying of heart trouble, and was constantly asking for his friend. The priest visited Eddie repeatedly and administered all the consolations of our religion to him. When the end came on the last day of May, ——, Eddie was seated in an easy chair, while his sister fanned him, and suggested pious aspirations. "Florence," he gasped, "get the rosary Father gave me. It is in my coat pocket. Put it around my neck," he directed when she brought it. "Thanks, sister," he then said with an assuring smile. "The Blessed Virgin saved me from the pen —the devil can't get me now."

DEACON FLOOD

THE missionary was vesting for holy Mass on Monday morning when a man of giant proportions and advanced years entered the sacristy. Falling on his knees, the man exclaimed: "I'll never do it again! Honest to God, I'll never do it again!" Taken by surprise, the missionary did not know what to say. Looking the man over, the priest observed that he was sober, well dressed, and apparently a hard worker. "What is it you will not do again?" he then asked kindly. "I'll never miss Mass again," replied the man, still on his knees. "Since my wife died ten years ago I haven't been to Mass until the mission began. I saw you looking right at me when you denounced some one for missing Mass like a heathen and eating meat like a dog."

The missionary then saw that the man had received an extraordinary grace. "Get off your knees before you take cold, my good man," he said, as he helped the old man to his feet. Putting his arm around the generous proportions of his visitor, the missionary

smiled and asked: "Now, what is your name, my good man?" "Tom Flood!" was the reply, "and I was sitting right in front of you when you were standing at the railing." "Well, now, Tom, you know I didn't use the language you credited me with. You are an honest man, and no doubt you were paying close attention to the sermon, but because you felt guilty in the sight of God you quoted my words in the language you used in making the application to yourself. This shows that you are no hypocrite, and that you intend to make the mission well. Am I right?" "Sure!" replied Tom Flood. "Well, then, let's keep this secret to ourselves. Don't tell anyone you have been negligent. Come to the exercises regularly, and I will help you make a good confession. Go now. God bless you, Tom."

Tom Flood went. He opened the sacristy door hastily, paused a moment, closed the door again, and advancing a few steps asked with deliberation: "Is there anything I can do for you, Father?" "There is," replied the missionary promptly. The mission was in a little town of a northern state. It was March, and the weather was inclement. As the missionary was alone and had to preach to the congregation in the morning, twice to the children during the day, and twice to the congregation at night, he strained his voice sufficiently without leading in the recitation of the rosary. By having Tom Flood say the rosary with the congregation he might confirm him in his good resolution, edify the people, and perhaps encourage some negligent Catholic to make the mission.

"What shall I do, take up the collection?" asked Tom, while his honest face beamed with fond anticipation. "I have something more important than that for you to do," replied the missionary. "I want you to be my deacon, and help me give the mission by leading in the recitation of the rosary every night." Poor Tom looked puzzled. "I would like to, but I am

afraid I can't," he finally said. "What? Don't you know the Our Father?" "Sure I do!" replied Tom with assurance. "And the Hail Mary?" "Of course, I do!" replied Tom. "All you have to do is to say the Our Father once and the Hail Mary ten times and you have a decade. Repeat this five times and you have said the rosary," explained the missionary. "But I noticed you sandwiched something in between the decades," persisted Tom. "The mysteries," replied the priest. "Let me take your prayer-book, so that I can mark them for you." When this was done Tom departed.

While the altar boys were lighting the candles for the evening services, Tom entered the sacristy. "Father, I have a fine school-ma'am out yonder," he began. "I don't want a deaconess, Mr. Flood," interrupted the missionary. Besides, you promised to help me." "But I am afraid of those mysteries," protested Tom. "Why, I marked them distinctly for you." "That you did, but I can't read," finally Tom confessed. "That is a circumstance we did not take into consideration this morning," deliberated the missionary. "For the present we will make a compromise. Ask the lady to say the Creed and to give out the mysteries, but, Tom, you must do the rest. God bless you." Thus it happened to the edification of the simple folks of the town that Tom Flood was converted and confirmed in his good resolution during the holy exercises of the mission.

THE EFFICACY OF CHILDREN'S PRAYER, ASSISTED BY MR. FLOOD

"IF YOU induce Mr. Vanier to receive the Sacraments," said the pastor, "I will consider the mission a success, even though others stay away. I

have had three missions already and haven't lined him up yet." "Tell me all about him," replied the missionary. "He is a French-Canadian," explained the pastor, "nearly ninety years old, but still active. He is a good citizen, sober, industrious, and has raised his family well. He has the faith, and contributes to the support of the Church, but rarely comes to Mass, and never receives the Sacraments." "I see you are asking for an extraordinary miracle of grace," commented the missionary. "Perhaps Our Lady will grant it through the prayers of the children when other means have failed."

Throughout the children's mission all joined in reciting three Hail Marys at every exercise for the special intention of the missionary. Thus assured, the missionary set out to interview Mr. Vanier. It was a warm afternoon in March. The snow had disappeared, but the frozen earth was covered with slush. The town in which the mission was held is situated in a pleasant valley of a northern state; a sparkling brook meanders through the middle, while the church is at one extremity and Mr. Vanier's cottage at the other. When the missionary came to the last block he had to ascend a steep incline on which there was no sidewalk. Here his foot slipped and he fell headlong into the mud. When he arose, his own mother could not have recognized him, but he proceeded and rang Mr. Vanier's door-bell.

Providentially, Mr. Vanier opened the door. "See what I get in coming to see you," remarked the missionary pleasantly. "Oh, I am so sorry, faddaar," replied Mr. Vanier, and soon had the members of his household busy restoring the priest to a presentable condition. "I am the missionary," announced the priest when they were finally seated, "and I have come to get you to make this mission." "I would like to please you, but it is too long since I confessed my sins," replied Mr. Vanier.

"You are an old man, Mr. Vanier, and haven't long to live," continued the missionary. "If you die in your sins, the devil will drag your soul into hell quicker than I fell in the mud a few minutes ago. If you receive the Sacraments during this holy mission, God's angels will wash away your sins better than I just washed the mud from my hands and face. It doesn't matter how long you have been away. I will help you make a good confession, just as I helped a woman last week who was sixty-five years away from the Sacraments.

Ever since he had become interested in Mr. Vanier, the missionary had tried to discover the cause of his conduct. "As he has no bad habits," he finally concluded, "the old man has some grievance against his wife." "I come near that," confessed Mr. Vanier, "it is sixty-four years since I received." "And I haven't met the man yet who couldn't do what a woman did," urged the missionary. "So let us shake hands on it. You promise to come tomorrow afternoon at three o'clock; and I promise that you will be heard first." As they shook hands Mrs. Vanier paused in her knitting to remark: "Yes, he promises, but he won't keep his promise!" The words acted like an electric shock to the old man. If the missionary had not been present there would have been a storm. "Silence, woman!" he said, to preserve the peace. "When two men shake hands over a bargain it's sacred, and not like two women gossiping over the back fence."

After Mass the following morning, the missionary called Tom Flood and told him of his visit to Mr. Vanier. "The days are short, Tom, and the walking is bad for an old man," he concluded, "so I will depend on you to see to it that Mr. Vanier will not be frightened by the crowd, but will be the first to go to confession this afternoon." "Leave it to me," said Tom, with a comprehensive wink. "I know I can rely on you Tom," replied the missionary.

When the priest entered the confessional that afternoon one man followed him to the right and another to the left. An instant later the curtain to the right was violently drawn aside. "Come out of that," said Tom Flood, as he unceremoniously ejected the penitent and thrust in Mr. Vanier, "the holy father said that Mr. Vanier was to be the first." The following morning three generations of the Vanier family filled the communion rail from end to end, and the old couple were the first to receive.

THE REWARD OF A HAIL MARY

"**M**R. FLOOD, is everybody making the mission?" the missionary asked one morning. "To be sure," replied Mr. Flood, "we came out of curiosity at the opening, and we have been like flies around a molasses jug ever since." "I am not referring to the pious people who cannot be driven away," persisted the missionary, smiling, "but to some ought-to-be Catholics that may have fallen by the wayside of life." "I never had any use for a turn-coat," volunteered Mr. Flood, "but if you are interested in that class we must own up that we have one in our midst. They tell me he used to be a professor at the Berlin university. He lives in the big house yonder on the avenue. He has never been near the church that I know of, but he told me a couple of years ago that he was sorry he wasn't a Catholic any longer." "Come with me and introduce me, Mr. Flood," pleaded the missionary, "I'd die for you, father, but I wouldn't fight the old man's daughter-in-law. Besides, the old man is sick at present, so it would be difficult to see him." "In that case I will call on him at once," replied the missionary, and walked on.

In response to his ringing, a girl of about fifteen years opened the door. When she saw a Catholic priest standing before her she screamed: "Oh, mama!" and disappeared. A moment later a middle-aged, well-preserved woman appeared. "What do you want here?" she demanded. "To see Mr. _____," replied the priest. "He is a Catholic, and has a right to see a priest when he is sick." "You can't see him!" said the woman, as she tried to slam the door in the missionary's face. Fortunately he anticipated her movement and planted a foot inside of the door-sill. "Just tell him that I am here, please, I know it will cheer him." "Just Wait a minute," the woman then said, as though capitulating, and departed. After waiting twenty minutes, the missionary entered and found the woman calmly reading a book. "I suppose I may see Mr. _____ now?" he asked kindly. The woman then pointed out the room of the sick man and left, slamming several doors as she proceeded through the house.

Upon entering the room, the missionary found a feeble old man in bed. His eyes were closed and his hands folded over the coverlet. His silvery locks and long beard gave him the appearance of Santa Claus. The missionary touched the folded hands, and the eyes opened. First the old man seemed dazed, then he stared, and finally sat up in bed and exclaimed, as he clasped his hands: "Thank God, you have come. Oh, how good the Blessed Virgin is to send you here to prepare me for death!" As though he had overtaxed his strength or his emotions, the old man then fell back apparently dead. The missionary became alarmed. He sought the old man's pulse and found none. He then knelt down and said three Hail Marys, that the old man would not die without the Sacraments.

As soon as Mr. _____ recovered consciousness, he gave the following outline of his life, in answer to an

urgent inquiry of the missionary. "I was born in a factory town in Germany," he said. "My father died when I was an infant. I remember my mother well. I was eight years old when she died. I am eighty-nine now. My mother was never strong. She was sick for a long while, and kind neighbors took care of her. One morning she was very weak. She called me: 'Francis, come here!' she said, and I climbed upon the bed where she was propped up with pillows. She put her arms around me, and said: 'Francis, your mother is dying, but she has no one to whom to leave you. Your father and I were orphans. I cannot die in peace until you make me one promise.' I was ready to promise everything. 'No,' said my mother, 'promise that wherever you may be, as long as you live, you will daily pray one Hail Mary to please your dying mother.' After I had solemnly promised, she kissed me, and said: 'And now I leave you in Mary's care!' She died that day.

"Some kind neighbor adopted me and sent me to school. I led my class through the grades and high school. Then the men that had worked under my father made up a purse and sent me to the Berlin university. Being the only Catholic there I was ashamed of my religion. I neglected Mass and the Sacraments and gradually omitted my prayers. By the time I graduated I had become a professed infidel. I was offered a position on the staff of the university and lectured there for thirty-six years. During that time, I committed every sin and actually hated God so much that I would have broken a thousand commandments to spite Him."

With tears coursing down his wrinkled cheeks he then said: "In all my life there is one thing of which I am not ashamed. I kept my promise to my dying mother. Even when I did not believe, or came home drunk, I had given orders to my servant not to let me retire until I first knelt down and said my Hail

Mary. Since I came over here my faith has gradually come back. My past life seems like a horrible nightmare. My sins haunt me day and night, but our Lady has obtained for me the grace of true sorrow. For eighty-one years I have daily saluted her in the words of the angel Gabriel, and now I feel certain that she has sent you here to prepare me for death."

The old man then made a confession of his mis-spent life with such clearness and precision that he seemed to have examined himself in the light of eternity. The missionary hastened to bring him Viaticum and to impart to him the other consolations of our faith. He assisted the old man in his agony, and closed his eyes in death. At the funeral the missionary narrated the pathetic story of Mr _____ life to a weeping congregation. All praised the goodness and mercy of Mary, and joined in the prayers for the repose of the old man's soul.

"HE IS ANXIOUS TO MAKE THE VOTE UNANIMOUS"

THE mission at Verona, N. D. proved to be a memorable event in the history of the town. Many Catholics had settled in the vicinity, but had not yet formed the habit of attending Mass regularly when the mission began. In response to the personal invitation of their zealous pastor, the good people came from all sides to attend the opening exercises, and were so favorably impressed that they returned at night with their neighbors and friends. An exceptional spirit of cordiality and good will was manifested by the non-Catholics of Verona. The Lutheran choir volunteered their services for the evening exercises, and rendered the Catholic hymns in a creditable manner. The Methodists kindly donated the use of

their chairs and vied with the Catholic fellow citizens in attending the exercises. Besides the usual features of a Catholic mission, one catechism class was started the first day for the children and another for adults preparing for their First Holy Communion. On the second day a third class was added for honest inquirers, thirteen of whom were received into the Church during the mission.

Saturday night the young men met in front of the church, after making their peace with God, and enumerated their acquaintances who had been to Confession. "The vote is unanimous," remarked one. "With one exception," replied a second. "I saw Frank Crimmons come in on the nine-thirty this evening. When he made this territory a year ago he told me he had been brought up a Catholic." "Boys, we ought to make this vote unanimous," declared a third. "I suggest we go to the hotel and bring Frank to Confession before Father leaves the church."

In answer to the violent knocking of the young men the traveling salesman arose and opened the door. "What's up, boys?" he asked in alarm when he saw the crowd in the corridor. "You are to dress as quickly as possible and accompany us," briefly explained the spokesman. Outside of the hotel the young men picked Frank up and carried him toward the church on their shoulders. "You aren't going to lynch me?" pleaded their victim as they proceeded in the darkness of the night. "Worse than that," replied the wag of the crowd.

The procession entered the church as the priest absolved the last penitent. Without further preliminary the men deposited their burden in the Confessional. "Father," explained their spokesman, "this fellow must go to Confession. He is the only Catholic within twenty miles who hasn't gone, and, I am sure he is anxious to make the vote unanimous." "Thank you, boys," replied the missionary cordially as he

took in the situation. "Under the circumstances, I suppose he is entitled to reduced rates?" "Certainly, Father," replied the young men in chorus. "This was indeed a most pleasant surprise," Frank Crimmons remarked to the missionary before leaving the Confessional. "I am glad the boys gave me the invitation to make the mission. I certainly am resolved henceforth to live a Catholic life."

THE COURTSHIP OF FRITZ WAGNER

THE mission at Norfolk, Nebr., was well attended from the beginning. When the special lecture for the young people was announced, a man who occupied the front pew with his family, introduced himself as Fritz Wagner, to the missionary. "I would like to know," he inquired, "whether you are going to tell the young people what the Church has to say on company-keeping?" "My boys and girls are growing up," he went on to explain, "and I want them to be here. They tell ma and me at times that we are old fashioned, that it isn't customary any more to pray the Rosary and Litany at home, and that they can take care of themselves without having father or mother with them. I tell you, Father," he went on, "we Catholic parents are having a hard time raising a family these days. The little ones are crazy about the movies and the big ones about motoring and dancing.

"My girls want to sit up late entertaining their beaus, and my boys would spend more than they earn if I gave it to them, and they are unfit for work when they are out three nights in the week."

"I heartily sympathize with you, Mr. Wagner," replied the missionary, "and will try to bring home their obligations to the young people this afternoon. If they could see life through the eyes of their elders

we would have no difficulty in making them realize the necessity of moderation, self-discipline and respect for authority. The danger on the one hand is that their spirits crave for diversions that easily degenerate into dissipation. On the other hand their innocent hearts are easily fascinated by the ways of the world like moths are attracted by street lights, and they don't suspect any evil until they are ensnared in it. They are honest and have a good will, and will aim to do the right thing if we kindly show them how their happiness for time and eternity depends on it. To succeed with them we must be patient in many things, indulgent in some things, but insist on what is essential."

"There is just the point, Father," remarked Fritz Wagner. "The world is drunk with dissipation. While others go the limit it is hard for us to hold our children to the essentials. When I came west thirty years ago and hired out as farm hand at a dollar a day, I had to be content with the essentials. I didn't have money for luxuries. I was glad to work to get ahead. Then it was unheard of for boys and girls of decent parents to be out all hours of the night. Now you are considered old-fashioned if you don't go along with the crowd to perdition.

"We had human feelings in those days just as well as the young people of today, but we controlled them and reaped the advantage later on. I had my heart set on Katie Schmitz before I was able to support a wife. I saw how devoted she was to her family. I observed how modest she was in her dress, and how devout in church. People said she was a good dress-maker and cooked better than her mother. For a year I tried to get acquainted with her. When I got an introduction she kindly invited me to call. I did so after Vespers one Sunday evening. We were just having a nice visit when her father came and said: 'Nine o'clock! Time for the Rosary!' When family

devotions were over, Mr. Schmitz said: 'Fritz, you go home! Katie, it is time for you to go to bed!' After thus taking part in Schmitz's devotions for a year, I finally said to Katie: 'Don't you think we two would enjoy praying the Rosary for ourselves the rest of our lives?' 'I think so,' replied Katie, 'but you better ask papa.' 'Mr. Schmitz,' I said to her father the next Sunday evening, 'I would like to marry Katie, and she is willing if you and mother give your consent. I think you know me pretty well by this time. I love Katie and will be good to her. I have a thousand dollars saved up and intend to rent the Hopkins' ranch until I can buy one of my own.' Well, Father, we have been very happy together these twenty-seven years. The Lord has blessed us with eight children and three sections of land. But I can honestly tell you that I would gladly lose the land and hire out as a farm hand again, if by doing so I could make our children as respectful, as pious, and as hard-working as Katie and I were when we got married."

FATHER SMITH PUBLISHES THE BANNS

WHEN the early settlers pushed westward over the plains of Iowa, Father Smith, an athletic young priest, was sent to — to minister to the Catholics of the surrounding country. Though his appointment was temporary at first, he soon became an integral part of the new community and eventually remained to the ripe old age of 86. As his idealism inclined him to austerity in his earlier years, the first generation that came under his influence respectfully called their pastor Father Smith. In proportion as grace and experience enlarged his vision and developed his sympathies, however, he began to be re-

ferred to as dear Father Smith. And for the last thirty years of his life his fatherly interest in all his parishioners was so well known that he was affectionately spoken of as dear, old Father Smith.

Those who knew him best, claimed Father Smith kept a more accurate account of his parishioners than could be accomplished by the most modern system of bookkeeping. To give you the biography of any one he had but to fold his hands over his lanky knee and look away into space. Instantly the particular individual, whom his memory would throw on the screen, would react the minutest details of his life before his pastor's mental vision. He probably acquired this habit of silently communing with the members of his flock during the long winter evenings he spent alone at his fireside.

In his later years, however, Father Smith's memory began to confuse facts and fancies before he himself became aware of it. Frequently when he thus surveyed the parish in the evening his thought would linger on Tim Hogan. Tim had faithfully cared for his mother while she lived, but why should he remain a bachelor now that she was gone? "And Tim would make a good husband for any girl, God bless him!" the old pastor would say as he nodded before going to bed. Some other evening his fancy would linger at the gate of Kittie Brady, who had been a mother to her younger brothers and sisters and seen them settled in life. "Talk about the wise woman lauded in the Proverbs," he would say, "Kittie, you deserve the best husband in the parish. God bless you for your devotedness."

One night Father Smith was in his usual reverie and fell asleep. He dreamed that Tim Hogan and Kitty Brady called on him and made arrangements to be married at High Mass, as was the custom in the _____ parish. He then slumbered peacefully on until after 11 o'clock. He was alarmed when he glanced

at the clock and did not pause to sift facts and fancies. As he picked up his candle and started for his room, he said with a fatherly pride: "Tim and Kittie will make an ideal couple. God bless them!"

There was a look of approval on the faces of the parishioners the following day when Father Smith announced: "There is a promise of marriage between Timothy Hogan and Catherine Brady, both of this congregation. Anyone knowing of any impediment that would prevent them marrying is bound in conscience to reveal it." After the services, Tim Hogan followed the pastor into the sacristy as Kittie Brady entered by the outside door. When Father Smith turned after bowing to the Crucifix, they both confronted him. "What's up?" abruptly demanded Tim. "How could you do it, Father?" pleaded Kittie. "God bless you, children!" said Father Smith from the bottom of his heart. After much arguing and explaining, the two finally convinced the pastor of his mistake. "It's a good mistake, children," concluded Father Smith. "Talk it over during the week and save me from making an embarrassing explanation next Sunday." Needless to say, the ceremony took place as originally announced by Father Smith.

AN OUTLAW IS CONVERTED THROUGH THE MEMORARE

AT 7 O'CLOCK on a pleasant morning in June, Bud Hawkins sat on a bench in Penn Valley Park, Kansas City, Mo. He was destitute, homeless, friendless and 87 years of age. As a youth, circumstances had thrown him in with Jesse James. Mutual esteem and interest had made them boon companions. They shared in countless holdups, bank and train robberies,

and shed much innocent blood. Having been condemned to the Kansas penitentiary for life, Bud Hawkins made his escape after forty years and now felt as free again as the birds that twittered in the branches overhead. As he sat there with hunger gnawing at his vitals, however, he almost regretted the sacrifice he had made to regain his liberty.

In his misery and dejection Bud Hawkins kicked the turf beneath his feet and uncovered a leaflet on which the Memorare of St. Bernard was printed. Picking it up listlessly he read it through. The words "Never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, and sought thy intercession was left unaided." arrested his attention. Though brought up without religion he had seen and read much. He certainly felt most helpless on this pleasant morning. After reading these words for the third time, he therefore said: "Lady, I am hard up myself. I haven't had a good meal in a week. I'll be thankful if you guide me to breakfast."

Bud Hawkins had entered the park from the new union station. Putting the leaflet into his pocket he arose and followed a path that led in the opposite direction. He emerged in front of St. Joseph's orphanage. Without a moment's hesitation he entered the enclosure and made known his wants to the sister who answered the bell. There must have been a feast in the convent, for Bud Hawkins still maintains he received the best meal of his life at the orphanage that morning.

After wandering about town to note the changes effected during the lapse of years, Bud Hawkins returned to Penn Valley Park for a nap. When he awoke the sun was sinking towards the hills of Kansas. The problem that confronted him now was to find supper and a night's lodging. Instinctively he turned towards the orphanage. and then checked himself. Taking the slip of paper from his pocket he read the

Memorare with devotion. "Lady," he then said, "you have made this a happy day for me. Would it be asking too much if you were to guide me during the night?"

Having deposited the slip of paper in his pocket again, Bud Hawkins started eastward through the park and emerged on Thirty-first avenue. After following this a few blocks he came to a large building and paused. Over the entrance was the sign: "Home of the Aged of the Little Sisters of the Poor." Within the enclosure he observed old men performing various odd jobs. He entered and asked for a meal.

"Is there any chance for me to be admitted here?" he asked when the sister returned. "I am poor, old and lonely, but I will gladly do what I can if admitted."

"We usually require a recommendation," remarked the sister casually. "If you have one there will be no difficulty about admitting you."

"I have only this!" replied Bud Hawkins as he produced the leaflet with the Memorare. "The Lady got me something to eat when I was starving and conducted me here this evening. I am not a Catholic, but I would like to know and serve God for her sake. If you let me stay I hope to show my gratitude the remainder of my life."

"Oh!" sighed the sister as she recognized the Memorare. "You shall be our Lady's honored guest."

At the next retreat for the old folks of the home, Bud Hawkins was baptized.



"THERE IS NO HELL!"

THE weather was threatening when the Arabic left Queenstown, November 5, 1903. For two days the elements marshalled their forces before they broke forth with violence. Then they raged for three days and nights with unabated fury, until they tore

the rudder from the Arabic. At this crisis the captain assembled the passengers and supplied them with life-preservers. "Unless God helps us," he announced, "we must all land at the bottom of the sea!"

Among the passengers was a lawyer. In Iowa he is known as Judas M. MacCarty, though he had been baptized in Cork, Ireland, as James Michael McCarthy. As a boy he had emigrated to the United States with his parents and neglected his religion, as a man to make a fortune. As a lawyer he specialized in singling out Irish immigrants as his victims. His plan was to gain their confidence and induce them to leave their savings with him, their countryman, until they were ready to make a favorable investment. In a short time he thus obtained possession of \$25,000 without giving any security to his creditors.

This amount enabled the lawyer to erect an imposing business block and acquire the reputation of being a public-spirited citizen. In due time gold letters on the office windows announced that Judas M. MacCarty was in possession. Hence, when the depositors came for their money they were informed there was no James M. MacCarty in town, and that Judas M. MacCarty would have them jailed as blackmailers if they did not cease annoying him. "You may deny your faith and scotch your nationality," replied one of his victims, "but you have basely betrayed us as Judas did the Master, and with him you will have your reward in hell."

MacCarty's conscience had already condemned his conduct as crying to heaven for vengeance, but this reference to Judas the traitor brought the torments of hell vividly before his mind. He thought of them by day and dreamed of them by night until they became an obsession with him. As he did not wish to make restitution, however, he hardened his heart against the promptings of grace until he became spiritually blinded. In this condition he found comfort in con-

vincing himself there was no hell, and then developed a hobby of proving this to anyone that would listen to him. Thus he lived to the age of 65, before a longing for the scenes of his childhood induced him to spend a vacation in Ireland.

When the storm overtook the Arabic, MacCarty became restless and apprehensive. His calm self-possession vanished, while the secret of his heart was uppermost in his mind. "What do you think of the storm?" he asked a sailor who was carrying the camp chairs inside. "I have never seen anything so threatening," replied the sailor. "If the Lord don't protect us we are all going to land in hell." "There is no hell!" protested MacCarty as he staggered towards his stateroom. "Just wait and see for yourself!" replied the sailor doggedly.

MacCarty certainly did not wish to experience the torments of hell. Hence, when the captain announced that the ship was at the mercy of the winds and the waves, and begged the passengers to pray for divine help, he was the first to fall on his knees. An eyewitness related, when they landed in New York, that MacCarty prayed in an agony of despair: "O God, save me! O God, spare me! O God, don't damn my poor soul to hell! I will make restitution and be a decent Christian if I ever set foot on dry land again."

MAN PROPOSES; GOD DISPOSES

ESTHER MEANEY was eighteen when her mother died. Bereft of her father as an infant, she had known only a mother's love and care, and under her guidance had grown into a pure, devout and sensible young woman. Only when she returned from her mother's funeral did she realize the vastness of her loss. Neighbors and friends, of course, offered her

sympathy and aid, but her heart was too desolate to profit by them for the present. Like one in a stupor she wandered aimlessly about the cottage she had called home, until her eyes rested on her mother's picture and her dying words came to her mind. "Cheer up, darling," her mother had said, as she affectionately took leave of her, "I will always be with you in spirit. God knows what is best. I leave you in Mary's care." Falling prostrate on her bed, Esther then shed copious tears, the first relief she had experienced since the good mother had departed.

As time subdued the intensity of her grief, Esther Meaney gradually yielded to the solicitude of her friends, sold her cottage, and went to live with an old schoolmate in the same town of Bloomington. Gradually, too, the diversions of social life began to fascinate and allure her. While still at home Esther had constantly cherished the desire of consecrating her love entirely to God when her mother would go to heaven. The desire faded away in proportion as a more seductive impulse entered her heart. Without causing her to omit accustomed devotions, this craving for earthly distractions dulled her fervor and turned her into a temporizing mood. After drifting thus for more than a year, she met James Hurley, who had returned to Bloomington after an absence of several years, and made a most favorable impression upon him. Though indifferent to his attentions at first, she eventually yielded to his entreaties upon the advice of her friends and promised him her heart and hand.

Just then a young woman registered at a local hotel whose arrival was destined to disturb the equanimity and fond anticipations of Esther Meaney. She first startled the community by having James Hurley arrested, and then sued him for desertion and non-support of herself and her child. To those who were interested she readily showed her marriage certificate. This proved beyond doubt that James Hurley and

Emma Hayes had been married in Chicago by Father Flannigan.

This sudden revelation affected Esther Meaney more than the loss of her mother. Death had robbed her of mother's visible presence, but this experience crushed her heart as in a vise without prostrating her. Of late she had rarely been seen in prayer before our Lady's shrine. Neither had she found it necessary to seek advice of her confessor. Now she suddenly realized she had need of both. After spending a long time in church, she sought an interview with her pastor. When she emerged from the rectory she carried the recommendation of her confessor in her bosom. That night she left Bloomington forever. Today she has not only recovered her fervor, but is beloved by the sisters and orphans of a well-known institution of charity.

“HE HATH BLASPHEMED”

BERT HENNESSY was not a miser. He said so himself. He maintained that it is man's duty to make all the money he can, and that God helps only those who help themselves first. His cynical disposition was rather Bert's misfortune than his fault, for he came to this country from Cork by way of Canada. He stopped long enough in that cold country to have the fervor of his faith and the generosity of his Irish nature chilled so badly that they remained permanently stunted ever afterwards. When he crossed over to the States, he eventually opened a meat market in _____, Ia. Here he was the first to open in the morning and the last to close at night, in spite of the fact that he had to go fifteen miles to a neighboring city after business hours to procure his supply of meat.

Bert Hennessy subordinated even his religion to his business. He paid his dues to the church because he

lived in a Catholic community and hoped thereby to advance his material interest. For the same reason he showed himself occasionally at divine services and received the Sacraments during the Easter season. But the glory of God was as foreign to his mind as the love of Jesus and Mary was to his heart. And so he remained unmoved by the admonitions of his pastor, the entreaties of his wife, and the example of the Holy Name society.

His customers admitted that Bert Hennessy was just in his dealings, but they called him the Irish Jew on account of his business methods. By paying cash for his supplies he obtained a discount from the packers, and by selling for cash he obtained quick returns and was able to increase his business. He therefore aimed to do a cash business, and positively scowled when even his best customers wished to run a monthly account. As a result of this selfish and short-sighted policy Bert Hennessy lost much of his trade to a competitor in ——, who sent his delivery wagon twice a week to Bert's town.

Lady Day had always been a great feast for the Catholics of the place. On that day most of the parishioners received the Sacraments, and the stores remained closed until after the services. Though a steady rain had fallen all night, Mrs. Hennessy prepared to take part in the services on Lady Day, and urged her husband to accompany her. "Bert," she pleaded, "this is Lady Day. You can't open the store before 10 o'clock. So come to church with me, and obtain our Lady's blessing." "I must thank myself for all I have," sneered her husband. "I wouldn't send a dog to church in this weather for all the blessings of our Lady."

After his wife had departed Bert Hennessy prepared to go to the store, so that he would be on hand when his customers would arrive. But he changed his plans when a friend in the city telephoned him that a man

who owed Hennessy ten dollars, had just stepped off the train. "Thanks," he replied cordially, "I'll run in and collect that money, and get back to open the store at 10 o'clock." In his anxiety to recover his ten dollars Bert Hennessy omitted to put the chains on his wheels. A mile from town his car skidded and overturned in a ditch filled by the rain. Here his lifeless body was discovered two hours later by the parishioners when they returned from divine services.

SHE WAS TAKEN UP TO HEAVEN WITH HER ROSARY

"I HAVE another friend before the throne of God," cheerfully announced Father Ryan as he returned from a sick call. "Mrs. Duffy was just taken up to heaven with her Rosary." "That is interesting. Tell us all about it," suggested the missionary, who was ever on the alert for an edifying story. "According to the scriptural standard of 'Whom the Lord loveth He chastiseth,' she must have been very dear to God," continued Father Ryan as he seated himself, "for she rivalled holy Job in affliction. "I trust it was not because she reaped as she had sown," suggested the missionary. "By no means," emphatically declared Father Ryan. "She always lived a pure, self-sacrificing life, seeking only to do God's holy will. That's why she died the death of a saint.

"Mrs. Duffy was above the average in mental endowment and Catholic education. Her husband was in the grocery business here in the early '80's, and for a while she was active in church and charitable works. When I came to Hampton about thirty years ago the Duffy's were prosperous and had five children. Shortly after my arrival I answered a hurried call to the Duffy home, and found that her husband had had a

severe hemorrhage. The doctors ordered him west for his health, but he soon returned to die among his own. Consumption was in the family. One by one the children followed their father to the grave. During these years Mrs. Duffy was not only the guardian angel of the home, but also a living copy of the Mother of Sorrows. Under such conditions the grocery business was neglected and bills piled up like snowdrifts. Eventually Mrs. Duffy lost everything, even her home. To crown her measure of affliction she contracted some disease of the eyes and became blind, when she was working to make an honest living ten years ago.

"Of course the whole town sympathized with Mrs. Duffy in her trials, but when she became helpless there were very few that wished to do anything for her. The authorities were about to take her to the county farm when a friend interfered and secured a modest home for her with another widow."

"And that friend, no doubt, was the pastor of St. Thomas' church," interrupted the missionary. "We heard of his charitable deeds before we came to this town, and have witnessed them since our arrival."

"It would have broken my heart to see her go to the poorhouse," replied Father Ryan, "but I now confess I made a good bargain with her. In return for the care she received, Mrs. Duffy cheerfully agreed to offer up her affliction for the spiritual welfare of my flock." "And that accounts for the unusual degree of fervor which pervades the entire congregation," commented the missionary.

"Of late," continued Father Ryan, "Mrs. Duffy grew too weak to accompany Mrs. Hogan to daily Mass, so I brought her Holy Communion at 7 o'clock. As she grew weaker she had her devoted nurse tie her Rosary to her left hand so that her worn fingers could hold the beads to the last. If I had known the end was so near I would have had you accompany me on

this visit. Ah, her departure was truly in conformity with her life! I had proceeded with the prayers for the dying up to 'Depart, Christian soul, in the name of the Holy Ghost, who sanctified thee,' when Mrs. Duffy's countenance was illumined with a radiant smile. Rising to a sitting posture, she raised her hands, clutching her beads heavenwards, and sweetly murmured: 'Oh, blessed Mother, draw me up to heaven with your holy Rosary.' Before I realized it her spirit had winged its flight."

"The Blessed Virgin is good!" remarked the missionary, as he wiped away a tear that stole down his cheek.

HE MISSED THE MEETING

FOUR Socialists arrived in Pueblo one Sunday morning to stir up trouble among the men working in the mills. One of their number, Frank Evans, was a native of the town. He was born of good parents in St. Patrick's parish and received his education in the parochial school. Unfortunately, however, he persisted in associating with evil companions, in spite of the repeated admonition of his superiors, and left town with them at the age of 15. During the twenty years that had since elapsed he had never written home nor heard whether his parents were still alive.

Though Frank Evans had fallen very low by this time, his better nature reasserted itself as the scenes of his childhood gladdened his heart. Observing a gold cross in the distance he pointed it out to his companions, and exclaimed: "That's St. Patrick's church, boys! I was baptized and received my First Communion there." "How touching!" sneered one of his companions. "The old town has turned your head," remarked another. When they reached Third and Routt streets an old woman leaning on a cane and

carrying a rosary entered the church. Frank Evans recognized her and commanded the driver of the taxi to stop. "That's my mother! I'm going to see her!" he excitedly exclaimed. "Let her go!" protested the others sternly. "If you must see her you can look her up after the meeting." But he leaped from the machine and hastened after his mother into the church.

The presence of his mother had touched Frank Evans keenly. What he now witnessed intensified his feeling and revived his faith. As he assisted at the services, the nobler scenes of his boyhood days passed vividly before his mental vision. He beheld himself leading in the recitation of the Rosary in the family circle. He recalled the kindness and the good example of the Sisters of Charity in the classroom, and the pains with which the pastor had prepared his class for First Holy Communion. He then contrasted his present lamentable condition with the purity and piety of those days, until, in utter disgust with himself, he fell on his knees and sobbed with the publican: "O Lord, be merciful to me a sinner!"

After Mass, Frank Evans followed the pastor into the sacristy, and had an interview with him that caused the angels in heaven to rejoice more than they would over the perseverance of ninety-nine saints. As he knelt before our Lady's shrine later on, he sobbed: "O Mother of God, how long have I ignored thee! But thou hast not forgotten me. No doubt my mother pleaded daily with thee for me. Thanks to thy tender mercy I again venture to raise my eyes to thee, for, relying on thy help, I am firmly resolved to change my life and return to the practices of my youth. Dispose my mother, who has suffered so much on my account, to receive me as her long-lost son." Needless to say, Frank Evans received a cordial welcome from his mother, and did not attend the Socialist meeting.

"HE IS TOO YOUNG TO MARRY"

"FATHER, I want you to speak to my son John," said Mrs. Ryan to the missionary after she had introduced herself and taken a chair. The mission at _____, Neb., was attracting the faithful from far and near to the edification and encouragement of the missionary, and burdening him with additional responsibilities. He had repeatedly been called upon to act the Good Shepherd in searching for the stray sheep of the flock, and now presumed he was about to be entrusted with another commission of this kind. He therefore indulged in an idle fancy, picturing John Ryan as a shabbily dressed individual who worked hard in the saloon of the town and spent his leisure reclining against the front wall, covering the sidewalk with tobacco-juice and filling the air with profanity.

"And what shall I say to John?" asked the missionary, anxious for a clue that might aid him in saving his soul. "That he shouldn't leave his old mother," replied Mrs. Ryan with sufficient feeling to touch a heart of stone. "I don't understand," confessed the missionary in his perplexity. If John were what he had just imagined him to be, any mother would be fortunate in losing him, he thought. "And what does John intend to do?" he asked. "Sure, he wants to get married," droned Mrs. Ryan. "Oh!" exclaimed the missionary, as he began to comprehend the difficulty. He then apologized in his mind to John for having wronged him.

During the moments he consumed in this mental readjustment, the missionary took occasion to study his visitor. Mrs. Ryan was a woman of medium height, plainly but neatly dressed, and about 70 years of age. Though advanced in years she was still vigorous and seemed to have lived an active, if not a

laborious life. "She has probably supported herself and her child by taking in washing," thought the missionary, "and naturally expects him to care for her now." "I suppose you are dependent on John for your daily bread," he suggested. "What?" demanded Mrs. Ryan indignantly. "I want you to understand I am no pauper. I own my own home in town, have \$5,000 in the bank, and have a farm of 400 acres."

Stunned by this revelation the missionary meekly asked: "Does John intend to marry a Catholic girl?" "The snip is a Catholic, all right, and belongs to a decent family," replied Mrs. Ryan peevishly. "Why then do you object to your son's marriage?" asked the missionary, as he began to suspect the mother of undue opposition to his matrimonial venture. "Because he is too young to marry," replied Mrs. Ryan in a tone of decision. Considering himself competent to judge of a marriageable age, the missionary persisted and asked: "How old is John?" "Father, I tell you he is too young to marry," replied the mother. "Mrs. Ryan, I demand to know your son's age," insisted the missionary. "He is only 44," acknowledged his mother with some misgivings. "And how old were you when you were married?" "I was coming 17," replied Mrs. Ryan with evident pride and satisfaction.

At last the case was clear as daylight. The mother was jealous of the young lady her son wished to marry and unjustly opposed their union. "Mrs. Ryan," he therefore said, "you are committing sin by opposing this marriage. John should have married twenty years ago. To make amends for the wrong done him I intend to marry the couple during the mission. We will take a day off and make it a parish celebration. Tell your son to bring the girl to the pastor and arrange the celebration." "I'll do nothing of the kind," indignantly replied Mrs. Ryan, as she hastily left the office.

SATAN HAD ROBBED HER OF PEACE

“I PITY the soul whom Satan has robbed of peace by means of a bad Confession,” remarked the missionary in the course of his morning sermon. When he concluded, a woman of nearly eighty years of age followed him into the sacristy. “I am the soul you pitied. I have always made bad confessions,” she said, and burst into tears. “I am glad you have told me,” replied the missionary kindly, “for we will now rob Satan of his pleasure by having you make a good confession.” “I have made bad confessions during many missions,” continued the woman between sobs, “so I beg you to listen to my trouble now.” A glance sufficed to convince the missionary that the woman was neither insane nor vicious, but a simple honest soul in distress. So he invited her to be seated and proceed with her narrative.

“In the place where I was born,” said the woman, “there was an excellent parochial school. It was the only one I ever attended. To inspire us with devotion to Mary there was a shrine of our Lady in every room. During the month of May the sisters invited us to bring flowers to decorate these shrines. The children brought flowers from their mothers’ gardens. As my mother had no garden and was too poor to buy flowers, I felt bad because I was the only one that did nothing to decorate our Lady’s shrine. While going to Mass one morning I saw some beautiful flowers in the pastor’s garden. Entering unobserved I picked a bouquet and carried it in triumph to my teacher. Not knowing where I had obtained them, the sister praised me publicly for bringing the finest flowers during the month of May. During the Ember days before the close of school the children were required to go to Confession. When I began to examine my conscience it gradually dawned on me that in taking the flowers for our Lady’s shrine I had

been guilty of theft instead of devotion, yes, I had stolen from the Church and so had committed a sacrilege. When my turn came to enter the confessional, I feared, if I told the priest what I had done, he would punish me and perhaps even denounce me before the whole school. So I concealed it, though I knew I was making a bad Confession. As time went on, I received my First Communion, was confirmed and married in that condition. For seventy years I have cried myself to sleep nights and trembled lest I would wake up in hell. I often tried to rectify that mistake but never could summon courage until I saw you look at me this morning and say you pitied the one Satan had robbed of peace by a bad Confession."

"Not only do I pity you, my poor woman," replied the missionary, "but my heart overflows with sympathy for you. Under the circumstances it was no sin, but an act of devotion to pluck the flowers. If the pastor had known your pious desire he would have praised you and perhaps invited you to come every Saturday to help decorate the altars in the church. Satan has certainly held you captive long enough. I must go to the Confessional now. Follow me, and I will help you make a Confession of your life. You may then receive Holy Communion on all the remaining mornings of the mission. You ought to thank God and our Lady for the peace of heart you have found again after all these years."

I PRAY FOR CHINA-BABIES

MRS. MARGARET BARRETT came to spend the vacation with her son John and his family. After making a failure of several undertakings, her husband had died ten years before, leaving her an insurance policy and a tract of land in the Messaba

region. When iron ore was discovered in the vicinity, she disposed of the land for half a million dollars and bought a fashionable home in St. Paul. Though Mrs. Barrett passed as a nominal Catholic, her mind and heart had never been leavened by Christian faith, hope and charity. When she unexpectedly grew rich, therefore, she also became arrogant with the assumption that springs from ignorance and conceit.

Thanks to the influence of Mrs. Barrett, Jr., John and his family were genuine Catholics and daily Communicants. When his mother arrived, she chided her son and his gentle wife for reviving such mediaeval practices as family devotions, and positively flew into a rage when she discovered the following morning that the entire family had been to Mass and Communion. "You simpletons," she concluded, "don't you see the priests are after your money? They will never get any of mine; and yet, when I come to die, I'll have a richer funeral than any of you." "Mother, I fear you are mistaken about the priests," replied her son. "If men of their education were after money, instead of seeking to smuggle us into heaven, they could fill the highest salaried positions in the land."

After her nap one afternoon, Mrs. Margaret Barrett discovered her granddaughter praying the Rosary before a statue of Our Lady. "My God, did I come to visit a convent!" she exclaimed. "Madge, what are you doing?" "I have just prayed the Rosary, grandma," replied the young lady, as she arose and cheerfully inquired whether there was anything she could do for her. "Have you been praying because your mother scolded you?" continued Mrs. Barrett. "Mama doesn't scold," protested Madge as she affectionately embraced her grandmother. "Perhaps your sweetheart has gone back on you?" persisted Mrs. Barrett. "No danger of that!" replied Madge with a smile that brought a dimple to each cheek. "Tell me, then, why did you pray?" insisted Mrs. Barrett. "I pray for

China-babies," replied Madge simply. "Oh, you overgrown child!" exclaimed Mrs. Barrett indulgently. "I will buy you the biggest doll in town." "Grandma, you misunderstood me," corrected Madge. "I love God with all my heart, and feel sad because Chinese parents kill their babies without even having them baptized. I pray that God may give them the grace of holy Baptism because Jesus died for them as well as for me." "Grandma," continued Madge as she leaped for joy, "in a month I am going to join the Missionary Sisters of Mary and go to China, where I hope to baptize those innocents and send them to heaven." "Child, you are crazy!" shrieked Mrs. Barrett as she stared at her granddaughter for a moment and then rushed from the room.

After a few days Mrs. Barrett found Madge alone again and said to her: "Child, I will make you my heir if you give up that foolish notion of becoming a nun." "You are very kind, grandma," replied Madge, "but I cannot accept your offer. On the one hand God calls me to this life, on the other, our Saviour says: 'It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.' With your money I could buy some of the fleeting pleasures of life, but the reward of serving God faithfully will be eternal happiness. Think of it, Grandma, 'Eye hath not seen nor ear, heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him."

This sincere profession moved Mrs. Barrett profoundly. "Madge," she exclaimed as she tenderly embraced her granddaughter, "I never had much religion, but you have taught me a salutary lesson. From now on I will be a practical Catholic, and, if you permit, I will finance your missionary labors. In the past I have made money my god, but now I too wish to do something to earn heaven."

“WHEN IN TROUBLE SAY A HAIL MARY”

TEN YEARS ago last May John Toner resolved to put an end to his misspent life. He was born of devout Catholic parents in St. Patrick's parish, Chicago, and graduated with honors from its school. In the days of his innocence he seriously debated for a time whether to study for the priesthood or to join the ranks of the Christian Brothers. As long as he was faithful to the advice of his mother, “When in trouble say a Hail Mary,” life flowed on serenely for him. Unfortunately, however, he gave up this beautiful practice when the world began to allure him, and willing companions appeared to lead him on the way to perdition.

During the twenty years that then rolled by John Toner became a drunkard, a gambler, and a frequenter of evil resorts. The pleadings of his wife as well as the tears of his hungry children were powerless in turning him from his corrupt associates or mending his evil ways. When he returned home at an early hour this morning after a protracted spell of dissipation, his wife confronted him with the lifeless body of their infant child in her arms. “May God forgive you, John, for letting your own children starve,” she said in an agony of despair. “I have endured your neglect and abuse in silence, but this has broken my heart.” And she fell in a dead faint.

John Toner's first impulse was to summon aid. He then turned on himself and condemned himself without mercy. Instead of asking pardon from God, however, he dwelt on the failure he had made of his life. “End all!” urged the tempter, and proceeded to suggest various appropriate ways of ending so miserable an existence. The unfortunate man finally decided to hang himself from “suicide bridge,” spanning the lagoon in Lincoln park. Providing himself with a

rope he disappeared. A Clark street car brought him to his destination. Here he fastened one end of the rope to his neck and the other to the bridge from which many have jumped to end their earthly misery.

When Toner arrived, dark clouds shrouded the placid waters of the lagoon. As he now stood prepared to leap into eternity they parted and permitted a silvery moon to flood the park with light. This caused him to pause with his right foot on the railing. Just then the large bell of St. Michael's church broke the stillness of the morning. Toner stood motionless and listened: "One! Two! Three!" he counted. "It is the Angelus!" he said, as he entered into a repentant mood. For years his guardian angel had waited for this opportunity. "When in trouble say a Hail Mary!" he suggested. "Don't damn your soul to hell. Be a man. Don't destroy your life, but change it. Turn to God in sincere repentance. You still have much to live for. The Angelus is announcing that God became man to save you."

With the rope around his neck, John Toner fell on his knees. He had forgotten the Angelus but still remembered the Hail Mary and the act of contrition. Until the sun rose out of Lake Michigan, he prayed as he had never prayed before, for pardon, resolution, strength and perseverance. He then went to St. Michael's church and made a good Confession. To-day he is known as a sober, industrious, and successful business man. He owns a neat home in Rogers Park, and loves to spend his evenings with his wife and family.



THE SEXTON IS CONVERTED BY THE "SINNER'S BELL"

THREE is an occasional confirmation of the saying: "The nearer the church, the farther from God." In a little town of Minnesota, Conrad Huber

had been sexton for many years, but had never been seen at the Communion rail before the Redemptorist Fathers came to preach a mission. As he was most exemplary in other respects, his negligence in approaching the Sacraments was a source of anxiety to the pastor, of solicitude to his family, and of sincere regret to the entire congregation.

In conducting the spiritual exercises for the faithful, the Redemptorist Fathers seek to awaken the consciences of negligent Catholics and stimulate their good will. One of the means they employ to attain this end is the tolling of the "Sinners' Bell" while priest and people kneel and pray five Our Fathers and Hail Marys for the conversion of the sinners of the parish. Church bells are solemnly blessed to bring a message of grace to all who hear them. At this exercise the bell is tolled because Mother Church is mourning the spiritual death of some of her children. And because there is hope while there is life, she prays to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament to restore these souls to the life of grace by sincere conversion.

Being a man of honor, Conrad Huber reluctantly tolled the bell for his own spiritual demise. Gladly would he have put the solemn warning of the "Sinners' Bell" out of his mind. Even if such a thing had been possible, his little daughter Frieda was on hand to prevent it. Embracing him tenderly before going to church Thursday evening, she said: "Papa, it makes me cry to hear you ring the 'Sinners' Bell' while you yourself have not gone to the Sacraments for ever so long. Promise me that you will go to Confession with us tonight. I will then gladly pray for the conversion of the others while you ring the bell."

That night the "Sinners' Bell" was not tolled at the accustomed time. One of the missionaries, who was on hand to keep order, found the sexton on his knees, weeping bitterly, while the bell rope dangled mechanically in his hands. "Toll the bell, Mr. Huber,"

he gently urged. "I can't. I haven't been to Confession for thirty-five years, and I made a bad one then!" "Don't let that worry you too much," replied the missionary as he reached for the rope and tolled the bell. "After Benediction come to me and I will help you make that all right." Conrad Huber accepted this invitation. Instead of kneeling in the rear of the church in the morning, as had been his habit, he went to the family pew for the first time, and edified the congregation by receiving Holy Communion with his wife and children.

A MOTHER'S LOVE

BOTH Mr. and Mrs. La Blanc were descendants of the French settlers in Louisiana. Though poor in material goods, they treasured their faith and were devout clients of Mary. God blessed them with an only son, whom they named Eli and sought to bring up in the devout traditions of the family. But Eli was talented and did not wish to remain on the plantation. After graduating from the high school, therefore, they enabled him to study law at the Tulane University. Having distinguished himself in his profession, he held various political positions and eventually became United States senator. Unfortunately, however, he neglected his religion after leaving home, proclaimed himself an infidel, and even denied his origin from the humble couple in Lafayette.

For many years Mr. and Mrs. La Blanc lamented the loss of their son and felt it the more he grew in prominence. When he was near the zenith of his career, his poor mother sought to visit him one day but was publicly disowned by him and refused admittance when her arrival was announced by one of his attendants. From that day she had to content herself

with praying for his conversion. Only a mother who had lost her son could fathom the depth of her grief and console her in her affliction. Thus it was that Mrs. La Blanc went to the Mother of Sorrows for consolation and help. For years she knelt daily before the Pieta in her parish church and prayed as St. Monica prayed for the conversion of Augustine.

In 1878 the yellow fever raged with particular violence throughout the South. One morning the papers announced that Senator La Blanc had been stricken with the dreaded disease. This was the only information his parents received of his illness. Mr. La Blanc knitted his brows when he read the paper. "Eli's career is drawing to a close," he remarked as he wiped his glasses and relit his pipe. "Soon the public will forget him, but we must take the memory of his ingratitude with us to the grave." "Has Eli the yellow fever?" cried his mother with genuine solicitude. "Oh, God, be merciful to him before he dies! Papa, I must go to see him!" she then said with decision. "Then you must go alone, dear," replied Mr. La Blanc sadly. "It's the only trip on which I am not prepared to accompany you!"

When Mrs. La Blanc arrived at the magnificent mansion of her son she was turned away as a harmless lunatic by the servants. Fortunately, however, the attending physician came from the patient just then. He knew the humble origin of the Senator, readily believed the woman, and took her to her dying son. "Oh, Eli, Eli," she exclaimed as she embraced him tenderly, "my heart has longed for you all these years!" The son was deeply touched and suffered his mother to caress him to her heart's content. "Mother," he said at last, "I am an awful sinner. I have become a real heathen. God cannot forgive me."

"You have wronged me shamefully, Eli." replied his mother, "and still I, your mother, have forgiven you. and prayed daily for you. Do you think that your

Mother in heaven, to whom I consecrated you as a child, will be less merciful than your own mother? No, Eli, she has been pleading with her Son for you all these years." "Then I will gladly see a priest and be reconciled to God," replied her son, deeply touched by the goodness of his own mother. He received the Sacraments with evident signs of repentance. In his will he bequeathed his mansion to the state as a home for orphans that had never known a mother's love. Though otherwise forgotten today, Senator La Blanc's memory is still held in benediction for this dying act of charity.

"TOO BUSY TO MAKE THE MISSION"

IN consequence of dissensions over the building of the church at _____, Neb., many parishioners absented themselves from divine services. When the pastor resigned, his successor sought to establish peace and fervor in the congregation through the exercises of a mission. The missionary was charmed with the church, which the piety of the faithful had erected to the service of God, and made a strong appeal to his hearers to become living temples of the Most High by making the mission with a sincere good will. Touched by grace, the parishioners resolved to make the mission well, and to bring their neighbors and friends to the exercises.

Frank _____ was one of the lukewarm Catholics of the locality. He lived on a ranch a mile south of the church, and was considered the richest man in the congregation. Though he had not contributed to the erection of the new church, he was well thought of by the people, and three of his friends called on him to invite him to the exercises. "Frank, we are having a mission," they said. "The priest is giving us a square deal, and we are all going back to church. We want

you to come too and make the attendance unanimous." "Gentlemen, I thank you for your kindness," replied Mr. ——, "but I am too busy to make the mission. I am going to ship four carloads of wheat and two carloads of cattle this week, and that will take up all my time."

While the faithful attended the exercises of the mission, Frank's wagons hauled wheat to the cars on the siding, and he followed in an old buggy to superintend the unloading. This activity continued until Friday night. On Saturday morning his cattle were driven to the yard, loaded and shipped. On his return friends begged him at least to receive the Sacraments even though he had not followed the exercises. But the rich man declared that he was tired and in need of rest, and so continued on his way.

Mr. —— was not seen again until Monday morning, when he was returning from the telegraph office with information about the sale of his cattle. The faithful had just attended services for their deceased relatives and friends, and were filing out of the church when they saw his well-known horse and buggy approach. Just as Mr. —— was in front of the church his body was observed to lurch to one side and lean heavily against the bows of the top. His faithful old horse seemed to sense some wrong and came to a stop. When his friends gathered round they found that Mr. —— had suffered a sudden seizure of some kind and was dead. "Poor Frank," sadly remarked the man who had invited him to the mission, "twenty times a day you passed the church during the mission without coming in, so the Lord let you die here to teach us a lesson. What will your wheat and your cattle, your land and your money profit you now?"

A SINNER IN WHOM OUR LADY WAS INTERESTED

WHEN Sister Amy was obliged to go to the hospital for an operation, her only regret was occasioned by her enforced idleness. "Think of the good I could do in the convent where the dear sisters are overworked," she remarked to the missionary. "Here I am away from my community with nothing to do but to get well." With a sigh of resignation she added: "May God's holy will be done!" "A religious, who is united to her divine Spouse by the Communion of the Cross can do much good," replied the missionary. "Patiently endure your affliction in union with the suffering of our Saviour for the success of the mission we begin next Sunday." "I will gladly do that," remarked Sister Amy, "and pray the rosary too for the conversion of the soul in whom our Lady is specially interested."

The mission was scheduled to close on the feast of the most Holy Rosary. In their eagerness to profit by the exercises the women crowded the church during the first week, and received Communion in a body on the last three mornings. When the week for the men began, the clergy felt some anxiety on account of the large number of young men absent in the federal service. To their surprise, however, men flocked to the exercises from all parts of the city, so that the Confessions were as numerous as during the women's week.

Towards the end of the mission, when the men were besieging the confessional to make their peace with God, the missionary opened the slide and asked the usual question: "How long since your last Confession?" Instead of the routine answer, the penitent replied: "About forty years, Father. Before I begin I want to tell you something about myself. I was born

of good parents in an eastern city and received an excellent Catholic education. The pastor even urged me to study for the priesthood. As I did not wish to make the necessary sacrifices I avoided him, and soon afterwards fell in with evil companions. Up to last night I haven't said a prayer since I drifted westward, and this is my first visit to a church since I left home. I have a good position here and have been sober since the state went dry.

"When I returned to my apartment last night I was surprised to find a hospital cot in the middle of the room. On the bed lay a young woman dressed as a sister. She was so absorbed in praying the rosary that she did not observe my entrance, while I was so spellbound that I did not stir until she had finished her devotions. In conclusion I heard her say: 'Dear Mother, I offer you my suffering and prayers for the conversion of this sinner, in whom you are specially interested.' In my bewilderment I then rushed from the room and summoned the landlady.

"When we returned there was no sign of the hospital cot or its saintly occupant. The landlady accused me of drinking, but in verification of my assertion I found this rosary on the floor, where it had evidently fallen from the sister's hand. It is needless to say this experience has made a lasting impression on me. I must admit, in spite of my misspent life, that the holy nun offered her suffering and prayer for my conversion, and that I am the object of the special solicitude of the blessed Mother of God. As soon as the landlady departed I knelt down and prayed the rosary as far as I remembered it. This morning I accidentally heard of this mission, and resolved to come and make a good Confession. If you help me settle my account with the Almighty, Father, I will be most grateful. And I promise you in advance to make a radical change in my life."

“THOSE SCAPULARS”

“GENTLEMEN, the sanctification of souls is the work of divine grace, of which you are to be the instruments,” the director of a seminary used to say to the students. “To become the fit instruments of grace you must labor as though the salvation of the world depended on your unaided efforts, and pray as though the eternal happiness of every soul was to be procured by your individual supplication.” Under his wise guidance the young men denied themselves all but the essentials of life, studied diligently to become enlightened ambassadors of Christ, and prayed perseveringly for the guidance of Providence and the quickening influence of grace. After their ordination they devoted a period of time to the immediate preparation for their missionary labors, and were then assigned as companions to experienced missionaries before they were appointed to conduct missions alone.

When one of these young missionaries was sent out alone for the first time he forgot the novelty of the journey on account of the responsibility that rested upon him. Little had he dreamed as a boy that one day he would be privileged thus to take the Master’s place in enlightening honest minds and inclining willing hearts on the way to true happiness. From the beginning he threw himself into his work with all the ardor of his soul, and stormed heaven night and day in humble supplication to make his labors effective.

Realizing his lack of experience the young missionary was ever on the alert for hints to improve the efficiency of his labors, and thus discovered the following instance of the mysterious operation of grace. While hearing Confessions a penitent presented himself and stated that it was thirty-eight years since his last Confession. “What point of my sermon touched you?” asked the missionary in the hope to use that

matter to advantage on other occasions. "Nothing that you said touched me," replied the man, "but when you held up those scapulars at the beginning of the service a thrill went through my soul and made me see all the sins I have committed since I was sixteen years of age."

"Have you been practising some devotion to the Blessed Virgin during these years?" asked the missionary with the assurance of receiving an affirmative answer. "As far as I remember I haven't said a prayer during all those years until tonight," honestly replied the penitent, and then proceeded to give an outline of his life. "I was invested with the scapulars on the day of my first Holy Communion, and wore them until I was sixteen. Then I was tempted to commit a mortal sin, but didn't dare do it with my scapulars on. As the hankering was great I threw away my scapulars and committed the sin." Here he paused awhile and wept like a child.

"I knew I couldn't be forgiven without Confession," he then proceeded, "and as I was ashamed to confess my sin I gave myself up for lost, and naturally quit all the devotions my mother had taught me. When you held up those scapulars I was here in the rear of the church, and, turning to the stand where they were sold, bought one. As soon as I put it into my pocket the fear of Confession left me. Some invisible power seemed to hold me in church after the services were over and force me in here. I am anxious to make a good Confession now, if you will kindly help me." "You ought to be thankful to our Lady all the days of your life for this miracle of grace," remarked the missionary with emotion, as he wiped away a sympathetic tear from his cheek, and proceeded to help the man make a good Confession.

“A JUDGMENT OF HEAVEN”

GOOD WILL must cooperate with grace to effect the sanctification of mankind. Both were in evidence at the Clinton mission. Though the parish is large, its parishioners were well prepared for the extraordinary grace. As a preparation, public prayers were said in the church for a month in advance, and members of the parish societies canvassed the city to invite the negligent Catholic and the honest non-Catholic to the exercises. When the missionaries came, they made so favorable an impression that the women alone filled the church and crowded the sanctuary at the evening services.

During the second week the mission was equally well attended by the men. At the solemn close of their services over nine hundred appeared in the procession with lighted candles. In fact, only three men of the parish did not make the mission. Two of these were nominal Catholics, who scoffed at the mission and ridiculed the persons that invited them to attend. The third belonged to a good family, but had grown indifferent and did not wish to amend his life. While the rest of the men were solemnly renewing their baptismal vows and protesting they would serve God henceforth with loyal hearts, these three met and prepared to go on a fishing trip the following morning.

Clinton is situated on the bank of the Mississippi. The Catholic church is built on an eminence a block above the Northwestern tracks. Perhaps our three fishermen, like Choré, Dathan and Abiron in the days of Moses, had guilty consciences when they approached the house of God. Perhaps they did not advert to the steep grade that extended from the church to the railroad crossing. At any rate, they went down the incline at a terrific speed just as a train came thundering along. The front wheels of

their auto had crossed the tracks when the train crashed into them. They were killed instantly, and fragments of their machine were strewn along the right of way.

The accident happened while men were on their way to work, and pious women were setting out to assist at holy Mass. Thus, in the space of a few brief moments, a large part of the congregation was assembled to witness the grawsome scene. Though horribly mangled the remains of these men were soon identified. When the multitude discovered that these were the men who had refused to make the mission, their excitement was hushed into silence and the fear of the Lord came upon them. Just then the reporter of the local paper appeared on the scene. When he learned that the men who had been killed had studiously avoided the excercises of the mission, he headed his report of the accident with "A Judgment of Heaven." "Father, if you were to come back for another mission now," remarked one of the parishioners to the missionary a month later, "I think even every non-Catholic in Clinton would attend."

NO HAPPINESS WITHOUT RELIGION

GLADYS HEATON-PAGE was the only child of her parents. As her father had been a miner and her mother an adventuress, she grew up without religion. Gladys was remarkable for her beauty and charm as a child, and became the admiration of all when she budded into womanhood. With her father's wealth at her disposal, and her mother's ambition to direct her, she received a superficial education in an exclusive institution, and traveled extensively before she married the man of her mother's choice.

As love of God and interest in suffering humanity were unknown to both Mr. and Mrs. Heaton-Page, they continued their selfish, pleasure-seeking existence after they had merged their lives. Before the war they maintained luxurious establishments in New York, Palm Beach and Pasadena, and radiated from these centers for a time as fashion dictated, or their caprice suggested. To safeguard their precious lives, when others sacrificed their lives for the success of the war, they retired to their mansion on Orange Grove Ave., Pasadena, with the intention of remaining there until the sun of universal peace would again gladden the world.

Patriotic Californians describe the Los Angeles district as the modern Garden of Eden, and Orange Grove Ave., Pasadena, as the very center of the garden, from which the fountain of life emanates. Be that as it may, eastern tourists find the boulevards and oiled roads of the district ideal for motoring, its vegetation a source of perennial delight, and its society sufficiently diversified to suit the tastes of all in need of recreation after the strain and grind of serious life.

But the Heaton-Pages were not tourists in need of rest and recreation. Neither were they invalids who had come to bask in the sunshine, and to inhale the sea breeze of California. In their selfish pursuit of new sensations they had never done a thing to benefit humanity. While others in their patriotism made great sacrifices for their country's sake during the war, they lived a monotonous life in their mansion. At length Mr. Heaton-Page went to Catalina to find diversion in hunting wild goats, and left his wife alone.

After her husband had departed, Mrs. Heaton-Page accepted an invitation to a social affair in Beverly Hills. Finding the company uninteresting, however, she returned home that very night. When one of her attendants entered her apartment about noon the next

day, she found the body of her mistress in a pool of blood upon the floor. Even her flimsy ball dress was covered with gore. Her husband's revolver lay near the body and on a table was this note addressed to her husband.

"Though I am young and rich, loved and admired, I am unutterably miserable. I have tasted all the pleasures of my station in life, and regret I ever saw the light of day. Had I been born as the child of a washerwoman I might have had ambition to seek happiness in serving God and benefiting mankind. But now my heart is sickened to death by a surfeit of vanities and I care to live no longer. Good-bye."

A GENUINE CONVERT

CLYDE WARREN was born of non-Catholic parents and brought up without religion. His natural integrity and studious habits had preserved him from the grosser vices of youth and made him a general favorite. In time he chanced to meet Marie Boulonger, a devout Catholic, and resolved to win her as his wife. When he sought to court her, however, she discouraged his attention by saying: "Mr. Warren, life is too serious a matter for me to consider any gentleman but a genuine Catholic as my special friend."

Six months later Clyde Warren presented himself at the Boulonger home and informed Marie's mother that he had joined the Church. Though Mrs. Boulonger heartily congratulated him on the step he had taken, she did not invite Clyde to see her daughter. Instead she gave him a motherly lecture on the responsibilities of married life, assured him of Marie's sincere attachment, but insisted on his proving him-

self a genuine Catholic before she would regard him as a prospective son-in-law.

If Clyde had not realized Marie's sterling worth he might not have been as persevering in his efforts to qualify for her hand as Jacob was to win Rachel. As matters stood, however, he was fully aware that his future happiness depended entirely on the efforts he would make to win the approval of Marie and her mother. This thought exercised a stimulating influence upon him throughout the year, and, like the foundation that is allowed to settle, prepared him for the responsibilities of married life. With no visible object on which to lavish his affection, he turned to God in prayer, reflection and self-examination. And, in proportion as his knowledge of religion grew, his heart also expanded with genuine devotion. He thus not only lived a blameless life, but also became accustomed to the recitation of the Rosary and the frequentation of the Sacraments. In fact, his conduct was so exemplary, and his zeal for the true faith so great, that in the course of the year he brought five other converts to his pastor for instruction.

Shortly after the marriage Ray Warren returned from the Philippines with various presents for the young couple. Among them was a gold chalice and other sacred utensils taken from a church. "Brother," began Ray in a flippant manner as he exhibited the looted articles, "these are from the shrine of the Catholic goddess near Manila." "Stop! You blasphemous robber!" exclaimed Clyde in righteous indignation. "We are Catholics! Your conduct is insulting to my wife and to me!" "What? You Catholics?" exclaimed Ray in surprise as he stared at his favorite brother. "You will have to pardon my ignorance in religious matters," he added in a conciliatory tone. "It has led me to make common cause with the boys who have filled the pawnshops from San Francisco to New York with this stuff. I apologize for having given offense.

Show me the extent of my wrong and I will make amends." By the time Clyde had concluded his explanation, Ray was not only prepared to make restitution but also to be instructed in the true faith.

THE MISSIONARY OF THE OZARKS

WHEN the Iron Mountain railroad was completed from St. Louis into the heart of the Ozarks, Bishop Hennessy, then pastor of Iron Mountain, purchased Arcadia college from the Methodists, and invited the Ursuline Sisters to conduct it as a boarding school for girls. From this center the sisters went forth to evangelize the children in the mining camps, and soon established day schools at Arcadia, Iron Mountain, Pilot Knob and Graniteville. By their zeal and spirit of sacrifice they gradually dispelled the mist of ignorance and bigotry that had settled in the Arcadia valley, and made many converts. The most conspicuous among the latter was the daughter of a prominent Ironton couple, who joined the Order, and, as Mother Blanche, labored faithfully to establish religion in the Ozarks.

When Father Lawrence Wernert succeeded Bishop Hennessy, he was chaplain of Arcadia college, and became pastor of a territory one hundred miles square, that had a Catholic population of about one hundred families. Observing the excellent work done by Mother Blanche at Pilot Knob, Father Wernert had her put in charge of the more promising school at Graniteville. It never entered the mind of Mother Blanche to confine her labors to the class room. There indeed she drilled the children in the practice of their religion, and gave them a thorough knowledge of the necessary branches of secular learning. But through the children she made the acquaintance, and

won the affection of the entire community. She used her influence to establish a Catholic atmosphere in the homes, and to induce the parishioners to attend divine services and to frequent the Sacraments. On Sundays Mother Blanche conducted the Sunday School for the benefit of the entire congregation, and sang hymns and led in the recitation of the Rosary on the Sundays Father Wernert did not say Mass in Graniteville.

By the time the mission opened, Mother Blanche had already made thirty converts and had practically all the remaining non-Catholics under instruction. The very first day two men introduced themselves to the missionary and said: "Father, we are Masons and want to give up the lodge; Mother Blanche told us to come back to the Church where we belong." Another day Mother Blanche introduced a young couple and said: "Father, these foolish children are sorry they were married by the squire. I have already instructed Mrs. _____. Couldn't you baptize her and the baby, and bless their marriage?" On another occasion a father introduced a healthy looking girl of eighteen to the missionary, saying: "Father, my daughter wants to become a sister like Mother Blanche. Will you tell her what to do?" With such influence at work, no mission could be a failure, thought the missionary.

Towards the end of the week a blizzard swept down on the place, and the thermometer fell to twenty below zero by Sunday morning. In this weather Mother Blanche drove ten miles against the wind and was in ample time to congratulate the people and to thank them for making the mission so well, before the final services began. On the way back to the convent she turned to the missionary and said with evident sincerity: "Father, you have done much good! You have reconciled two Masons, baptized four converts, and induced every Catholic in the district to receive the Sacraments." And then with a sigh she added: "Would that I could be a missionary!" "Mother Blanche," re-

plied the missionary, "you are the missionary of the Ozarks. I have reaped what you have sown. Without your self-sacrificing efforts to cultivate this corner of the Lord's vineyard there would be little religion in Graniteville."

"BECAUSE I LOVE THE BLESSED VIRGIN"

"FATHER, I came to see you about a very sick lady, who lives next door to me," said a caller before the late Mass at a Detroit mission. "She is not a Catholic, but is anxious to be baptized." "Is her husband a Catholic?" inquired the missionary. "The brute is an apostate," replied the woman. "Mrs. White wanted to become a Catholic when they were married, but he wouldn't let her. Since then he has abused her shamefully. During one of his drunken spells three months ago he knocked her down and kicked her in the side, rupturing something internally. She has suffered terribly since, and is dying as the result of his mistreatment."

"No punishment would be too severe for that man!" protested the missionary indignantly. "But I am surprised," he went on, "that Mrs. White is anxious to become a Catholic after receiving such treatment from one who should have been one." "That's just it!" continued the woman. "She is the sweetest little thing you ever saw. She suffers without complaining and prays for him night and day." "Please write the address on that pad at your elbow," directed the missionary. "I will call on her as soon as the morning work is done."

As the missionary started to leave, the woman detained him. "Wait a moment, Father, I haven't told you all," she said. "When her husband realized the

harm he had done, he knew there would be trouble, so he left before the neighbors found out. Mrs. White is staying with her parents. They cannot understand why she wants to turn after receiving such treatment from a Catholic. Her mother is anxious to humor her, but her father will shoot any priest that will dare enter his house. Besides, Mrs. White belongs to some beneficial society, the members of which are bigoted non-Catholics. They have vowed Mrs. White shall not turn Catholic and watch at her bedside from early morning until late at night."

"That makes the case interesting," remarked the missionary smiling. "Let us vow that, with the help of our Lady, this poor woman will not only die a Catholic, but will also receive all the rites of the Church." "Tomorrow is Thanksgiving Day," he planned aloud. "Would those good women be on guard at one o'clock?" "I think not," replied the woman with approval. "Come to my house and bless my children, who have the whooping-cough. While you are praying over them I will go next door and investigate. If the women are gone I will tell the folks I have a new doctor for the children and would like him to step in and see their daughter."

The following day the missionary had no difficulty in seeing Mrs. White. In answer to his inquiry she replied: "I want to become a Catholic because I love the Blessed Virgin. I used to work with a Catholic girl who was very modest and reserved," she went on to explain. "When I asked where she learned this nice way, she took me with her to the church after work, and made me kneel with her before the Blessed Virgin's altar. Do you know, I saw the eyes of the statue look at me reproachfully, and I felt ashamed of a thousand things I had done to which I had paid no attention before. I told the Blessed Virgin I was sorry for them, and asked her to help me be good. From that moment I wanted to be a Catholic.

"Until I met with this accident I visited that church daily, and prayed that Jack would quit drinking. I have studied the Catechism during my leisure hours and know all the prayers."

The missionary gave that noble soul all the Sacraments for the dying after he had baptized her conditionally. Before leaving he presented Mrs. White with a large nickelbound crucifix enriched with the special blessing for a happy death. When the women returned to stand guard that no priest would enter, they saw this crucifix, as she clasped it to her lips. "Take that horrid thing away from her," ordered the more officious one. When they proceeded to do so, they found that her soul had gone to a better world."

AN INFLUENZA CONVERT

DURING the influenza epidemic the hospitals were overcrowded with patients. Among those who had the disease in a malignant form at the County hospital, was a woman who had been a faithful worker in one of the non-Catholic churches. Though the doctors and nurses did all they could for her, she felt weak, miserable and disconsolate. Daily she saw the priest ministering to the Catholic patients and contrasted their restful composure with her own desolate condition. "Why not have the consolations of my own religion?" she thought, and so requested the nurse to telephone for her pastor.

When the minister and his wife arrived the following day an Irish clerk happened to be at the desk. "I have been called to see Mrs. So-and-so," began the minister with an assurance he did not possess; "how is she this morning?" "She is a very sick woman," replied the clerk in a perfunctory manner after glancing at the records. "You are her family doctor, I sup-

pose? Ward five. The nurse will direct you." "I am her pastor," corrected the visitor with some misgivings, "and this is my wife."

In an instant the clerk was all attention. "It is so kind of you to come," he began with a roguish twinkle he could not conceal. "Since this awful epidemic no clergyman but those from St. Joseph's church have called on the patients. On account of the contagion of the disease," he went on as he eyed them keenly, "the regulations forbid us to admit anyone but a doctor or a clergyman. However, as your wife shares your labors, she is privileged to accompany you to the patient. To avoid trouble I will write out a permit for you and 'phone the head nurse to direct you."

"Is this disease awfully contagious?" inquired the minister's wife in alarm. "It is very contagious," replied the clerk solemnly. "You take your life into your own hands by entering the ward, even when you wear the gown and mask. But don't let that worry you. Surely every true shepherd is expected to do that for the members of his flock." "Flock or no flock," replied the minister's wife, "I will not see the patient. I have a flock of little ones at home." "Very well, madam," continued the clerk. "In that case I will make out the permit for one." "We thank you for your kindness," the minister's wife interposed, "but the permit isn't necessary. I will not permit my husband to contract the disease and give it to me and the children." Then turning to her husband she simplified Christian ministration to the dying by saying: "Dear, write sister a note and tell her we will pray for her recovery, and call on her when she gets well."

The note was written and delivered, but somehow did not produce the effect expected from a mediator with Christ. After revolving the matter in her mind for several hours, the patient called the nurse and said: "Kindly ask the priest to see me when he makes his visits in the morning." "I'll 'phone for him now,

if you don't mind," replied the nurse. "You see, he lives close by and requested to be called any hour his services are required, and we don't know what the morrow may have in store for you." As usual the priest came prepared to administer all the Sacraments. He saw at a glance there was no time to be lost. After a few kind words of instruction he baptized the woman conditionally, heard her Confession, administered Viaticum and Extreme Unction to her and gave her the plenary indulgence for a happy death. When he made his rounds the following morning he found a different patient in her place. "She passed away quietly at 2 o'clock," explained the nurse in answer to his inquiry.

HE HAD THE PRIEST BUT NOT THE SACRAMENTS

DURING a mission in Chicago the pastor took one of the missionaries out for a ride. "We'll call on Father ——, if you don't mind," he suggested as they drove along; "I haven't seen him for months." Just as their car slowed down Father —— came out of the parochial residence with his cane in his hand. "I'm delighted to see you both," he said as he greeted them cordially, "I am on my way to see old man Scallon, who is dying. I have been to see him twice, but couldn't induce him to receive the Sacraments. His family is among the best in the parish, too. It's providential you called. Do me the favor of accompanying me. I am worried about him."

"We have time," remarked the missionary in answer to the pastor's look of inquiry, and in a few minutes the three priests ascended the steps of the Scallon residence. For years Mr. Scallon had been a conspicuous figure on the Stock Exchange. Though he supplied his wife liberally with money, he was

so absorbed in business matters that he hardly took any interest in the development of his children, and certainly allowed himself no time for the practice of his religion. Even during his illness he sought for a time to keep in touch with the market by means of the telephone, but during the last week he had done little else than stare into space.

The first time Father —— called, he suggested to Mr. Scallon that it would be wise for him to be on the safe side and receive the Sacraments. "Lots of time for that when a man comes to die," replied the patient hotly. "At least you might make up for some of the prayers you have neglected by saying a few devoutly while you are sick," kindly admonished Father Smith, hoping to find him in better disposition when he called again. The next time, however, Mr. Scallon greeted his pastor with the inquiry: "How is the market, Father?" Observing that the patient had grown visibly weaker in a few days, Father —— replied: "For you the stocks of the kingdom of heaven are at a premium, and all the treasures of earth will soon be worth no more than the first spade of sand that will go to fill your grave." "I'm interested in other matters for the present," retorted the patient, as he turned his face to the wall.

When the three priests now entered his room Mr. Scallon stared vacantly at them and murmured: "Three of them! They have come to tell me that I must die, and give up all!" "We have come to sympathize with you in your suffering," replied one of the visitors, "and do all we can to make you happy." "Tut! Tut!" muttered the sick man. "See here, Mr. Scallon," said the pastor earnestly, "the doctor says you cannot live another hour. We came to open heaven to you. If you insist on damning your soul, no one can prevent you. Still, you ought to think of your wife and children, who are weeping and praying for you in the next room."

"Don't kill me with your importunity. Give me ten minutes to think it over, and I'll do as you say for their sakes." Some moments were consumed in telling the good news to the family. Then the pastor handed the holy oils to the missionary, saying: "Tend to him. We'll run over and bring the Blessed Sacrament." But the two priests had not reached the front door when the nurse emerged from the sick room and said: "He is dead! He had a convulsion and was gone before I could call you, Father." "He had the priest, but not the Sacraments," grimly remarked the pastor to the missionary as they returned home.

THE GRAND JURY

HOLY TRINITY parish, —, Okla., had been in ill repute for years before Father — was appointed pastor. Under his zealous and paternal management, however, its scattered and indifferent members were gradually brought together and welded into a harmonious unit that rivaled the early Christians in its spirit of faith and sacrifice. Not only were the feasts of the year celebrated with due solemnity, but a beautiful Gothic church and a commodious parochial residence were built and paid for, and a flourishing school was established. Thus within the space of ten years Holy Trinity parish had developed from a disrupted institution to become the model congregation in the diocese.

As in the day of holy Job, Satan had reason to be envious, and eagerly awaited an opportunity to sow discord among the good people of —. Strange as it may seem, the incident that furnished him the occasion was the death of a mule belonging to one of the prosperous farmers of the locality. For mutual protection the farmers of the state had organized a bene-

ficial insurance society. The owner of the mule was a member of this organization. Its chief officers resided in —— and were members of Holy Trinity parish.

After a severe electric storm the carcass of the mule had been found in a field by the son of the proprietor. He notified the officials of the Farmers' Mutual Benefit Association of the death of the mule, and filed his claim for indemnification. As the Farmers' Mutual did not insure against storms, however, the payment of the indemnification depended on whether the mule had died a natural death or had been killed by the lightning. The officials maintained that, if the mule had died a natural death, it would have pawed the soil. Hence, as the soil was undisturbed where the carcass was found, they refused to pay the insurance, and were upheld by the local judge.

The incident had thus been closed when rumor informed the proprietor of the mule that the officials of the insurance society had accused his son of perjuring himself at the trial. Without any investigation to discover the correctness of the statement, he forthwith sued the officials in the circuit court for defamation of character, and put in a claim for \$25,000 damage. As he was a prominent and aggressive individual, a goodly number of parishioners sided with him, while the others sympathized with the officials. Thus the congregation was on the verge of disruption when the mission was announced.

For a while the efforts of the missionaries to establish peace and harmony were in vain. But when they refused the Sacraments to all who would not be reconciled and live in peace, they soon had the support of the congregation. The owner of the mule finally consented to withdraw his slander suit and leave its decision to the pastor and the missionaries. As all the interested parties pledged themselves to abide by the decision of "the grand jury," the priests assessed the interested parties equally to defray the expenses al-

ready incurred in the slander suit. When their decision was announced with due solemnity from the pulpit, the good people of —— credited the Fathers with the wisdom of Solomon, and cried out: "Thanks be to God, the scandal is ended!"

"MARY LOVES YOU STILL"

"**A**RE there any ought-to-be Catholics in —?"

inquired the missionary while discussing the prospects of the mission with the pastor at the dinner table. "Unfortunately there are some on whom I have thus far made no impression," replied the zealous pastor. Among those he enumerated a few were inveterate drunkards, some were hopelessly entangled in sinful marriages, others were in possession of ill-gotten property, and still others were rather victims of circumstances than malicious sinners. "It may prove both interesting and profitable to call on those in the last-mentioned category," suggested the missionary. As the pastor was willing, they spent the Saturday afternoon before the opening of the mission in giving a personal invitation to them.

Among others, the fathers called on a prominent lawyer by the name of Doyle, whose wife had recently died. As a young man, Mr. Doyle had unfortunately married a non-Catholic woman before a Protestant minister. In consequence both husband and wife had given up the practice of religion, and permitted their children to grow up in complete ignorance of spiritual things. When Mrs. Doyle died, her children were more solicitous to divide her property among themselves than to comfort their desolate father. Bereft of his wife, and ignored by the children for whom he had slaved forty years, Mr. Doyle was thus in a receptive mood when the priests called upon him. He grate-

fully accepted their invitation to make the mission and attended the exercises faithfully.

The Sisters of Mercy conduct a boarding and day school in _____. Besides teaching the children the lessons in the catechism, these sisters give a practical turn to their religious instructions by directing the children to take care of the altars in the parish church, and to sing hymns during divine services. At the invitation of the missionary, both sisters and pupils labored faithfully to make the Blessed Virgin's services as impressive as possible. Not only did they decorate our Lady's shrine with countless flowers and candles, but they also prepared all week for a solemn procession in honor of our Lady.

Saturday evening the boys wore cassocks and surplices, while the girls were dressed in white. They entered the church carrying banners and a statue of our Lady, and sang a popular hymn with singular correctness and devotion. Before they had marched around the church many a heart throbbed anew with devotion towards our spiritual Mother, and many an eye was moist with heavenly joy. Towards the end of the sermon the missionary exhorted the faithful to make their act of consecration to the Mother of God with childlike love and confidence. "Even though you have neglected her since you passed from under the influence of your natural mother, O sinner, Mary loves you still," he said, when the vehement sobs of Mr. Doyle threatened for a while to interrupt the beautiful ceremony of consecration.

When the services were over that night, Mr. Doyle sought the pastor and said with great earnestness: "Father, you know the Godless life I have lived in this town, while the missionaries are strangers to me. Help me, therefore, to make a good Confession, and keep an eye on me for a while that I amend my life. I am firmly resolved to repair the past and to serve God and His holy Mother faithfully."

"MARY IS MY MOTHER!"

"I will give a nice picture to the child who can give a good reason for honoring and loving the Blessed Virgin," announced the missionary in his desire to instill devotion to Mary in the hearts of the children. Though the parish was small and had no Catholic school, the children were sincerely attached to the pastor and attended their exercises faithfully. Instantly all faces beamed with anticipation. Among the children that were anxious to give a reason for the faith that was in them was a little girl who waved her hand frantically. Doubting her intelligence, however, the missionary permitted an older one to answer the question. With the assurance of a theologian she replied: "Because the Blessed Virgin is the Mother of God!"

"A very good reason," remarked the missionary, as he realized how the children had profited by the instruction of their devoted pastor and friend. Having given the promised reward, he availed himself of the opportunity to explain the dignity of the Mother of God and asked for additional reasons for honoring the Blessed Virgin. Again the little hand waved frantically while an eager face pleaded to be heard. "Well, little one," asked the missionary kindly, "why do you love the Blessed Virgin?" "Because Mary is my Mother," replied the little girl.

"Out of the mouths of infants Thou hast perfected praise," thought the missionary in the words of the Psalmist, when another hand was eagerly raised before he could express his astonishment at the wisdom of the answer given. "Well?" he asked. "Father, I know this little girl's mother," protested the owner of the hand, "and she is not the Blessed Virgin." Upon inquiry the missionary discovered later on that this objector was the child of negligent parents and did not attend instructions regularly. With some misgivings

the missionary turned to the little one who had claimed Mary for her mother and asked: "How do you explain this difficulty?"

"Father," replied the devout client of Mary, "this girl knows my human mother, but the Blessed Virgin became my spiritual mother when she gave us Jesus for our Saviour." "Well said!" remarked the missionary with cordial approval. "Every one of us has a human mother and a spiritual mother. As our human mothers gave us natural life, so Mary gave us that spiritual life to which we were born in holy Baptism. Our human mothers feed, clothe and care for us because they love us; but if Mary let her dear Jesus die upon the cross that we may have spiritual life, she loves us more than all other human mothers ever loved their children. We should, therefore, thank God for having given us the Blessed Virgin for our spiritual mother. If we often think on Mary's love for us poor sinners we will all glory in claiming her for our mother, and we will go to her in all our spiritual difficulties just as we go to our human mothers in all our natural wants. If we love Mary, we will do something to honor her every day." Then, turning with confidence to the little girl, he said: "As a reward for your wise answer I will gladly give you the finest picture I have, but first I wish to ask you another question: What do you do to show your love for your spiritual mother?" "Please, Father," replied the child, "I wear the scapulars and pray the Rosary every day."

CONVERTS FROM LUTHERANISM

"I AM going to town this afternoon and show those preachers their error," solemnly announced Mrs. Gruber at dinner on Thursday, after patiently listening for four days to the praises of the missionaries from the members of her family. Mrs. Gruber was a

conscientious and devout Lutheran. Since the death of her husband she was more concerned about the religious development of her children than about their material progress. After fifteen years of example and precept, she now realized that her children were in danger of renouncing her religion, and resolved to win them back by converting the missionaries.

The mission at ——, Minn., had been well advertised and attracted an attendance that grew day by day until the church was too small to accommodate the devout worshippers. As the Gruber children had few diversions on the farm their mother gave her reluctant consent for them to attend the mission. The preacher, the sermon and the devotion of the faithful fascinated them to such a degree that they attended every night. As they gradually obtained a glimpse of the light of truth they began to show a decided preference for the Catholic faith. They had been particularly outspoken at the dinner table in discussing the mission.

"I have come to warn you of the evil of your ways," began Mrs. Gruber when the missionary entered the little parlor of the rectory, "and beg you to accept the truth before you do more harm in the community." "My good woman, I do not understand what you mean," protested the missionary with some misgivings. "You do not understand?" replied Mrs. Gruber. "You know very well the Catholic Church was totally corrupted when the Holy Ghost inspired Martin Luther to preach the pure word of God and save the world from the darkness and vice into which the Catholic Church had plunged it. When my husband died he left me with four little children. These I have tried to rear in innocence and piety, even as my good mother brought me up. Since they have attended your revival meetings they have expressed a desire to embrace your errors. It will break my heart to see them forsake the religion of their forefathers."

"Now I understand your position," replied the missionary kindly. "I sympathize with you in your anxiety about your children. You deserve praise for serving God in the sincerity of your heart. I therefore ask you, what do you think of a man who says Christ made a promise and did not keep it?"

"He is a blasphemer!" replied Mrs. Gruber emphatically.

"I agree with you," remarked the missionary. "Christ founded His Church for the salvation of mankind. He sent the Holy Ghost to keep her in the way of holiness and truth. He promised to remain with that Church to the end of time, and confidently predicted the gates of hell would not prevail against her. Before the so-called Reformation your forefathers were Catholics. According to your own words, Martin Luther blasphemed when he said the church which Christ has established, has apostatized from His teaching. As sincere Christians I invite you and your children to return to that Church from which unscrupulous politicians forced your ancestors."

Staggered by the truth, Mrs. Gruber had no reply to make. That night she and her children joined the inquiry class. Before the mission closed they had been received into the one true Church.



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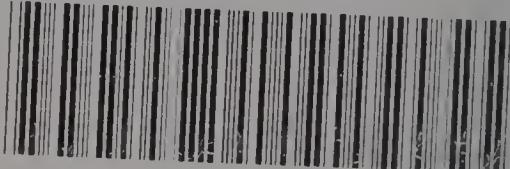
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